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heinrich wölfflin's ideas and historiographical discourse

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ABSTRACT

This thesis on Heinrich Wölfflin (1864-1945) is a problematisation and, essentially, a revision of the interpretation of his personal discourse: the theories, themes and implications of three of his texts. This re-evaluation is a historiographical analysis in connection with the unpublished material in the Wölfflin archives, which establishes Wölfflin's concern for the subject in terms of an anthropological *Kulturgeschichte*. The subject-driven terminology of the texts indicates an aesthetics of perception and reception. Wölfflin's thinking is analysed with regards to his methodological practices (formal analysis and comparison of two images) and academic scholarship (focusing mostly on Renaissance and Baroque studies). His texts are an exemplification and evidence for the theoretical conception of the historical categories (in a philosophical and epistemological sense) of bodiliness (*Körperlichkeit*, *Körperhaftigkeit*) and visibility (*Sichtbarkeit*, *Anschauung*) within the cultural transition between the fields of historicism and modernity/modernism. Through the impact of photographic reproductions he demarcated an analytical typology of architectural form and spatial effects, and of modes of depiction (of artists, sculptors or architects) and categories of beholding (of the viewer), with emphasis on the underlying and ontological connection between each of the two domains, that is, bodiliness in the *Prolegomena* and *Renaissance and Baroque*, and visibility in the *Principles of Art History*. The fundamental and problematic interweaving of issues of theory and history characterises Wölfflin's theories throughout his life and in this his discourse is symptomatic for the emergent discipline of art history. The construction of the Wölfflinian field is set up in relation to the conditions of the intellectual context of the discipline, as extrapolation of aesthetics, philosophy, psychology, epistemology, systemisation, *Wissenschaftlichkeit* and history-writing. The identification and unfolding of multiple intentions, ambiguities and problems are crucial aspects of this interpretation of Wölfflin's theory of art history in theoretical and practical terms.

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kaarina-nancy bauer
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content

INTRODUCTION p. 1

chapter one p.33

PHILISOPHICAL PSYCHOLOGY PROJECT

Prolegomena zu einer Psychologie der Architektur, 1886

part one	embodied architecture	p. 39
part two	the architectural search for self-knowledge	p. 109

chapter two p.133

HISTORY AS WISSENSCHAFT

Renaissance und Barock, 1888

part one	the baroque vs. the renaissance	p. 139
part two	the historicity of bodiliness	p. 185

chapter three p. 233

FROM BODILINESS TO VISUALITY

Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe, 1915

part one	spatial aesthetics of the subject	p. 240
part two	visual worldviews	p. 316

CONCLUSIONS p. 359

BIBLIOGRAPHY p. 367

INTRODUCTION

Scholars and historians have interpreted Wölfflin's texts and ideas very differently. Their assessments range from praise and admiration to objections and criticism. Gantner described the reception of *The Principles of Art History* as consisting of both "passionate love and passionate attacks"¹; a judgement which may be extended to represent the reactions towards Wölfflin and his ideas.

A selection of interpretations reads like this: "Wölfflin's *Renaissance and Baroque* [1888] ... established the baroque as a legitimate style"², but the text was also seen as "a basic study of the 'decadence of the Renaissance'"³. The most acclaim came in response to *The Principles of Art History* (1915), a text which was seen as "not only his major work, but, at the same time, the most significant book in the German language of our time"⁴, and "often described as the most influential and widely read book ever written by an art historian"⁵. The 1915 text was regarded as an "epoch-making methodological treatise"⁶, presenting "ground-breaking findings and realisations"⁷, and as "one of the most powerfully and concretely realised theories of the aesthetics of artistic production"⁸, "which every art historical methodology has to work through" and

¹ Gantner (1945), p. 9. "leidenschaftlich geliebt und leidenschaftlich bekämpft".

² Schwarzer (1995a), p. 78.

³ Hodin (1962).

⁴ Gantner (1961), p. 61.

⁵ Hatt and Klonk (2006), p. 72.

⁶ Ferguson (1948), p. 362.

⁷ Wisser (1934). "bahnbrechende Erkenntnisse".

⁸ Brown (1982), p. 402.

deal with.⁹ The text is considered to be "one of the greatest and best-known formalist essays in the literature of art history"¹⁰, and "has become a standard introduction to aesthetic seeing"¹¹. The compliments continue with reference to the affirmation that "the worldwide success of his Principles of Art History is, of course, unquestioned"¹², "its terminology was pioneering and path-breaking"¹³. It is "a text that for generations has been read as a supreme example of the history of art as the history of style"¹⁴, and which was esteemed as "the rule-book in a way, of the new art history"¹⁵. Wölfflin was identified as a "theoretician of style"¹⁶, "the formalist"¹⁷, and as "a master of analysis"¹⁸. He was described as the "tall Swiss with beautiful blue eyes and a firm and self-assured manner of delivery that held the *auditorium maximum* spellbound".¹⁹ "Since his time, the names of his contemporaries have mostly faded into semi-obscurity or fallen into oblivion, while Wölfflin's works continue to be readily available and widely read. He has become what no one can be in his own time: a classic"²⁰, accordingly he can be considered to have had "a unique significance for the *Kunstwissenschaft*"²¹. Wölfflin is important in that he created a "new history of form", and added "vivacity and sharpness" to his

⁹ Gröger (1944). "mit der sich jede kunsthistorische Methodologie auseinanderzusetzen hat".

¹⁰ Summers (1989), p. 387.

¹¹ Mundt (1959), p. 305.

¹² Warnke (1989), p. 172. The translations into many other languages can be considered as evidence for this statement.

¹³ Gröger (1944).

¹⁴ Holly (1994), p. 350.

¹⁵ Wolf (1934).

¹⁶ Hüttinger (1967), p. 110.

¹⁷ Adler (2004), p. 431. Carroll (2001), p. 87.

¹⁸ Grisebach (1924), p. 10.

¹⁹ Gombrich (1966), p. 92. Gombrich described his experience of Wölfflin at the University of Berlin in 1930, where Wölfflin held a guest professorship for the semester.

²⁰ Brown (1982), p. 379.

²¹ Christoffel (1946), p. 36.

analyses.²² Praises mention that "the overwhelming influence of Wölfflin is well known"²³, but also, rather more ironically and critically, that "where he lives, there is the suburb of the German *Kunstforschung*"²⁴. "Wölfflin remains a great comparer, [but also a] prisoner of his binary rhetoric".²⁵ "But there were also objections to Wölfflin's views from more serious quarters. They reproach him for removing art history from the greater coherence of *Geistesgeschichte*".²⁶ "No great discernment has been needed to recognise that Wölfflin's formalism is seriously limited, that... [it] is illuminating but, as it stands, untenable".²⁷ "Wölfflin's categories had great influence in affecting the historical scholarship both of music and literature, without ever reaching unquestioned acceptance among art historians themselves".²⁸ "Enemies, which are not lacking, scold him as 'formalist'"²⁹, he "has so often and superficially been accused of formalism"; additionally, "it was often and mostly reproachfully commented that he always only adapted the one theme of the Renaissance and the Baroque".³⁰ "With all admiration for the great and, in its own way, masterful achievement, one has to say that his method is too one-sided and leads only to limited results".³¹ "Nowhere in art history can one observe greater confusion than in the interrelation of psychological and historical categories

²² Baldass (1949), p. 290.

²³ Zucker (1925), p. 78.

²⁴ From article in *Berliner Tageblatt*, 9. Oct. 1911. "wo Wölfflin lebt, der Vorort der deutschen Kunstforschung ist". I regard this comment as ironic because Wölfflin seems to be honoured by the author, but this means also that Wölfflin is not the centre of art historical research, located merely in the suburb, the outer hemispheres of the discipline.

²⁵ Recht (1995), p. 53.

²⁶ Grisebach (1924), p. 11.

²⁷ Podro (1982), p. 98.

²⁸ Kubler (1962), p. 32.

²⁹ Grisebach (1934), p. 216.

³⁰ Strich (1956), p. 28; 11.

³¹ Weisbach (1957), p. 52.

articulated by Wölfflin".³² The criticism continues with the reproach that he "reduced the wealth of historical evolution to a few fundamental categories, a few typified schemes".³³ "Examples are presented with a certain arbitrariness, finer nuances are not coming to the fore. Complicated issues appear as too simplified and schematised", and "one cannot fix the development in such rigid polarities".³⁴ "Like other cultural antitheses, this opposition achieves a logical clarity at the expense of historical accuracy, oversimplifying and distorting the character of both periods".³⁵ "The attempt to make the history of art appear more logical than it is, frequently results in imposing a pattern of dichotomies and contraries on the historical process".³⁶ "On the one hand, [a] complete neglecting of general history, an identification of art history with a purely or solely form-analysing history of human vision -not so in Wölfflin himself, but for his immediate and mediate students- and, on the other hand, [an] abandonment, or at least, a commitment to a singular portrayal of an entire oeuvre of an artist".³⁷ "One cannot define a period by its moods".³⁸ "His explanation for the origin of style, which postulated the machine-like urgency of periodicity, the vagueness of racial undertones, and the mysteriousness of temperament, are no longer taken seriously, the task remains of replacing these nebulae with something more substantial".³⁹ "Wölfflin's attempt to find 'principles' (*Grundbegriffe*) by which changing modes of vision could be described was not, by and large, accepted: most historians found

³² Bauer, Hermann (1976), p. 102.

³³ Antal (1949a), p. 49.

³⁴ Weisbach (1957), p. 52; 53.

³⁵ Steadman (1990), p. 22.

³⁶ Steadman (1990), p. 5.

³⁷ Zucker (1925), p. 78.

³⁸ Steadman (1990), p. 72.

them useful but empirical tools, not the sort of *apriori* universal categories by which images of all kinds could be analysed".⁴⁰ "Wölfflin's teachings have become self-evident for countless art historians, his concepts are common property and most [scholars] are no longer aware of their origins".⁴¹ "Many people may not know or no longer know what they owe to Wölfflin".⁴²

PRIOR SCHOLARSHIP

The quantity and the variety of scholarly assessments of Wölfflin are incredible.⁴³ Even the commentators mention this aspect; Lurz captured it rather poetically, stating that "the image of Wölfflin is shimmering in various variations in the literature".⁴⁴ "It is characteristic of a scholar like Wölfflin", Warnke wrote, "that his work always provoked people to take sides, for or against; his work was invariably subjected to a truth test or was scoured for its epistemological stringency".⁴⁵ The volume, plurality and complexity⁴⁶ of the prior scholarship on Wölfflin, present to some extent an inspiration for a new approximation of an interpretation. I asked myself, why people describe(d) Wölfflin in such different ways. The scholarship on Wölfflin is so diverse and therefore problematic because the commentators have different intentions and present

³⁹ Zupnick (1961), p. 272.

⁴⁰ Schwartz (2005), p. 148.

⁴¹ Landolt (1944).

⁴² Justi (1934).

⁴³ They are ranging from broad comments to refined and detailed evaluations. I attempted to include every scholarly reference, comment, criticism and interpretation of Wölfflin, I could find, in a separate section in the bibliography entitled 'Texts about Wölfflin'. But, I am sure there are secondary sources which escaped me; the bibliographical collection is, therefore, by no means a complete list.

⁴⁴ Lurz (1981), p. 51.

⁴⁵ Warnke (1989), p. 172.

⁴⁶ By complexity I mean the various and quite divergent motivations for the criticism of Wölfflin and his ideas.

various positions within the discipline of art history. Rather than list all the prior scholarship and evaluating each elucidation⁴⁷, I want to describe certain significant characteristics of these criticisms by dividing them into groups.⁴⁸ A differentiation of the scholarship on Wölfflin into three main groups allows me to disentangle and distinguish the various agendas of the commentators and their interpretations.

The first group unites 'the admirers', the students and followers of Wölfflin. They celebrate, describe and summarise his accomplishments, and defend Wölfflin and his ideas against criticism, often on the occasion of his birthday or to accompany the publication of a new edition of his texts, continuing even after his death.⁴⁹ Scholars in this group emphasise and affirm the effect and significance of Wölfflin in art history, establishing and confirming thereby his ideas and methodology as (present or past) status quo and as firmly belonging to the canon of the discipline.⁵⁰

The second group comprises 'the critics'. 'The critics' respond to, react against and criticise Wölfflin's ideas, in order to differentiate them from their own theories and approaches to art history. These scholars are often in a certain generational conflict with Wölfflin. 'The critics' extend and build upon Wölfflin who is considered a leading authority, in order to position themselves within the discourse

⁴⁷ As done by Lurz in an extraordinary detailed manner. Lurz (1981), pp. 3-5; 11-46; 217-244.

⁴⁸ I am aware that this is a very artificial presentation of the prior scholarship. Several scholars who had interesting engagements with Wölfflin's theories will be left out unfortunately (e.g. Croce who discussed Wölfflin within his own distinct discourse of philosophy).

⁴⁹ 'The admirers' usually wrote newspaper or journal articles, describing their personal experiences of Wölfflin. They belong, very roughly, to the first half of the 20th century.

⁵⁰ Baldass (1949), Christoffel (1954), Andreas (1955/1956), prime examples.

of theory and methodology of the discipline. This group is illustrating the reception and the after-effect of Wölfflin's texts and theories.⁵¹ In this sense, Wölfflin provided a base from which 'the critics' developed their own ideas.⁵² They identified and contested problems and ambiguities in Wölfflin, from which they constructed and legitimated their research and subsequent theories. These generally younger scholars⁵³ had to clarify⁵⁴, comment upon and engage with Wölfflin, in response to the continually increasing volume of research, analyses and specialisation of art historical writing. Generally, this involved the "repudiation of speculative, apriori system building as a form of explanation".⁵⁵ Schwartz situated the intensification of this critique in the 1920s, and characterised it as "a period of radical questioning and of a rejection of the kind of thought the 'founding fathers' represented", a situation which "was termed, even then, a crisis of the discipline".⁵⁶ This 'crisis' marks a general revision and recasting of the approaches of the discipline. Due to the research which developed new fields with regard to literary, social or economic references⁵⁷, it seemed no longer possible or relevant to unify all historical material into totalities.⁵⁸ "The most ambitious art historians to emerge in the 1920s", Schwartz

⁵¹ The history of the reception of Wölfflin and the after-effect of his ideas is very interesting but, unfortunately, too extensive and complex to be included here (an entire thesis could be written about this topic).

⁵² Hart (1995), p. 90. Hart mentioned Panofsky.

⁵³ Panofsky challenged Wölfflin at the age of 23, just a year after submitting his PhD at the University of Freiburg.

⁵⁴ Frey (1946), p. 32. Frey commented that "the multivalent term [vision] required a clarification and an analysis, if it is supposed to become a really productive concept in the research of art (*Kunstforschung*)".

⁵⁵ McCorkel (1975), p. 35. McCorkel also observed that "this rejection has grown into a general distrust of all theorising" (p. 35).

⁵⁶ Schwartz (2005), p. 151; 130. Schwartz mentioned Wölfflin and Riegl in this respect.

⁵⁷ The Marxist critics Benjamin and Schapiro come to mind.

⁵⁸ In Wölfflin's time, this abundance of research and knowledge was, arguably, *not* yet available and present. While he wanted to capture the unity of objects, the later scholarship sought to frame the diversity of the material, unity was no longer a pertinent task or issue.

noted, "thus began their careers with major statements about earlier major statements".⁵⁹ Three art historians stand out in their criticism of Wölfflin: Panofsky, Gombrich and Hauser.

In his critique of Wölfflin, Panofsky articulated and established his theory of iconography and iconology⁶⁰, an extension of the *geistesgeschichtliche* approach, which prioritised intellectual content over visual form.⁶¹ Panofsky writes that "a search for essential and definable differences between succeeding generations or groups of generations would be futile on principle"⁶², and "to build up a system of '*Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe*' is the objective of theory and not of art history"⁶³. Iversen commented that Panofsky "criticised and creatively misread the great art historians of his time", Panofsky's concerns were particularly fuelled by his "response to Wölfflin".⁶⁴ This reaction towards Wölfflin constituted "the opposite of formalism [which] is 'contextualism'".⁶⁵

⁵⁹ Schwartz (2005), p. 146.

⁶⁰ Wölfflin's formalism is considered as the first pre-iconographical step in Panofsky's method.

⁶¹ Cf. Ferretti (1989), p. 177: Panofsky "can conceive of form only as part of the expression of a content". Farago (1995), p. 84: Panofsky "rejected Wölfflin's distinction between form and content as an over-simplification that confuses vision with higher processes of apperception and cognition". Although Wölfflin stated that he acknowledges the significance of content and *Geistesgeschichte*, and the inseparability of form and content as such, he nevertheless wanted to focus on the visual aspects of form in his analyses. *Grundbegriffe*, p. 113, 261; 'Revision': p. 277, 279, *Principles*, p. 95, 226; the 'Revision' essay is not included in the translation.

⁶² Panofsky (1960), p. 1.

⁶³ Panofsky (1983), p. 46. Interestingly, in the 1924 article "*Über die Beziehung zwischen Kunstgeschichte und Kunsttheorie*" (On the relationship between art history and art theory), Panofsky mentions five apriori principles of art which are embodied in five pairs of oppositions and which are remarkably similar to Wölfflin's, they are: plenitude – form, time – space, optic – haptic values, depth – surface, merging form – division. "Together these categories establish the universal possibilities of art not its actual instantiation, Panofsky emphasises" (Hatt and Klonk (2006), p. 102f). This means, despite his repudiation of Wölfflin's -what Panofsky took as general- terms, Panofsky himself developed five pairs of conceptual relations.

⁶⁴ Iversen (1986), p. 271f. My emphasis.

⁶⁵ Summers (1989), p. 385. Summers specified that "one of the most powerful contextualist methods has been Erwin Panofsky's iconology". Similarly, Drost (1927) criticised Wölfflin's notion of 'visuality' as too restricted and too restrictive, which legitimated the search for an extension of the theory. Drost subsequently presented his own ideas about "Form as Symbol", which approaches the art object from its intellectual content. Martin (1955) argued also for the prevalence of the analysis of iconological content according to the specialisation of this new technique of

Gombrich also criticised Wölfflin in exposing the latter's ambiguities and logical problems in his theories⁶⁶, in order to present his own ideas about form and style, periodisation, psychology, perception and visuality. Gombrich utilised the theoretical understanding that evolved after Wölfflin, especially in the field of psychology (cf. *Gestalttheorie*), to undermine or limit the value of Wölfflin's notions.⁶⁷ Gombrich was not interested in explicating Wölfflin's theories as such; he used them strategically and referred to them as outdated, for his own ideas to be rhetorically more valid and current.

Hauser criticised Wölfflin in order to exemplify his own sociological and materialistic approach to art history. Accordingly, Hauser described Wölfflin's texts as the "theorisation and idealisation of the entire course of history", which overlooked the real origin of the change in style, namely its sociological presuppositions.⁶⁸ Hauser regarded Wölfflin's ideas as "fiction", and he found fault with Wölfflin for not including and reflecting on the real social and material conditions of the change.⁶⁹ Like other scholars⁷⁰, Hauser accused Wölfflin of ignoring Mannerism in his differentiation of the Baroque from the Renaissance.⁷¹ The categorisation of Mannerism resulted, in

scholarship, and criticised Wölfflin's *Grundbegriffe* as "penetrating as these observations were (and it would be absurd to disparage Wölfflin's work), it is now evident that his categories have certain limitations" (p. 165). My emphasis.

⁶⁶ Gombrich's criticism of Wölfflin's definition of the category of the Baroque, as dependent on the Renaissance, in his famous essay, 'Norm and Form', is illustrated more extensively in chapter two on *Renaissance and Baroque* (in the section on 'comparison').

⁶⁷ Woodfield (2001), p. 71. Gombrich "had already become deeply suspicious of the whole idea of a cultural psychology of an epoch in writing his dissertation on Giulio Romano". Of course, Wölfflin's generalisations must look simplistic when one analyses and researches one particular individual in a highly specific cultural and historical context of existence.

⁶⁸ Hauser (1958), p. 243.

⁶⁹ Hauser (1958), p. 138.

⁷⁰ Mainly Mannerist scholars.

⁷¹ Hauser (1964), p. 57ff. Stechow (1955), p. 174. Zupnick (1961), p. 266. Kirchman (1979), p. 20. Steadman (1990), p. 102. The critique of Wölfflin's identification and

my view, from the increase in the scholarship on the field of the Baroque which made the "grand, epochal frames such as Renaissance and Baroque too large to help make critical distinctions"⁷². The terminology also became a problem because the application was extended to quite different cultural settings, geographical locations and timeframes.⁷³ Heyl even suggested with regard to the term Baroque, it might be better to "settle the matter by ceasing to use words which, because they mean so many different things to different people, have, in fact, come to mean nothing", or at least that "this widespread assumption of the intrinsic unity of the Baroque period needs to be questioned more than it has been".⁷⁴ For Bazin, a specialist of Baroque studies, "it is useless to try and reduce the art of the baroque age to a non-existent unity, or to a formal antithesis between the classical and the baroque; this was

characterisation of the timeframe between 1520 and 1580 as Baroque and not as Mannerist, cannot be sustained because the art historical concept of Mannerism has been developed some time after Wölfflin had composed and published his text Renaissance and Baroque in 1888 and his Principles in 1915. Rampley (2001, p. 283) noted that "attempts to establish the specific character of Mannerism became prominent only after Riegl's death" (1905). Antal (1949b, p. 74) wrote that "the analysis of the Baroque art began with Riegl in the last years of the 19th century, that of Mannerism with Dvořák in the years preceding World War I". Jansen (1970, p. 12) also identified Dvořák as launching Mannerism, but positioned the event in the year 1920. Pevsner (1946, p. 119; of 1969 ed.) located the interest in Mannerism in the year "1914, in a lecture at the University of Freiburg by Walter Friedländer, which was not published until 1925". Pevsner demarcated the time when the term "Mannerism was first used and its extend and character defined between 1920 and 1925" (p. 123). In the same essay, Pevsner elaborated that precisely the "relative popularity of Wölfflin's [1915] book" sparked the research into this particular timeframe of the 16th century which led to the emergence of the concept of Mannerism (p. 122). Hermann Bauer (1992, p. 19) dated the acceptance of Mannerism as an independent style by art historians to the 1920s, emphasising that it only gained wide-spread use when the *geistesgeschichtlicher* approach became prevalent. Most of these references show that the discussions about Mannerism, as art historical style and concept, belong to the 20th century. This means that Wölfflin's 1888 text (the 1915 text is more problematic) cannot be criticised for identifying this timeframe as Baroque, for the notion of Mannerism had not been developed yet. It should be noted that Wölfflin's Renaissance and Baroque was published before Riegl's Stilfragen (1893) and Spätrömische Kunstindustrie (1901). It could be argued that Wölfflin was one of the instigators of further discussions and research into the material, the concept and the periodisation of the Baroque and subsequently of Mannerism.

⁷² Ackerman (1962), p. 237.

⁷³ Stechow (1946), p. 112.

⁷⁴ Heyl (1961), p. 277; 275. My emphasis.

an age which produced an abundance of styles".⁷⁵ Of course, at this point in time when Bazin wrote this in 1968 -more than 50 years since the *Principles* (1915) and 80 years after *Renaissance and Baroque* (1888)- it is obvious that Wölfflin's characterisations and ideas have been superseded due to the masses of new research and information which meanwhile have been accumulated. In this respect, it seems even surprising that Bazin targeted Wölfflin's ideas so specifically.⁷⁶ But this shows that Wölfflin remained an authoritative figure, within Baroque studies at least, against which scholars wanted and needed to argue. Continued references to Wölfflin's apparently simplistic and untenable notions usually functioned to promote the status of the methods of 'the critics' themselves. This leads to the implication that "the speculative past of art history [exemplified by Wölfflin] itself comes to seem mere prehistory, the proto-science from which art history [as 'the critics' practiced it] has elevated itself".⁷⁷

All three 'critics' developed their approaches to art history through their engagement with Wölfflin. Wölfflin's theories were among the prevalent topics with which 'the critics' were confronted when they entered the field of art history at University.⁷⁸ The agenda of an emancipation in their intellectual development and formation coloured 'the critics'' interpretations of Wölfflin from the beginning. In a sense, they were not interested in a description of Wölfflin's views on certain issues -which 'the admirers' were- but rather in a new

⁷⁵ Bazin (1968), p. 14.

⁷⁶ Although Bazin did not refer to or name Wölfflin explicitly.

⁷⁷ Melville (1990), p. 12.

⁷⁸ In this regard, Brown (1982, p. 380) noted that "those who criticise Wölfflin's apparent oversimplifications almost invariably do so in the service of convictions about the complexity and difficulty of style formation that they have unwittingly learned from him".

conceptual framing and methodological approach towards the issues themselves.⁷⁹ 'The critics' identified problems in Wölfflin's texts and ideas, which is a relevant concern when examining Wölfflin's theories. But for 'the critics', this was not a purely receptive but rather an engaging process of judgement which stimulated and provoked them to resolve and rectify these complications by developing the theories further in their own terms. Their defined goal was to destabilise and then surplant Wölfflin's ideas with their own. This group of criticism engages with Wölfflin on a theoretical and an historiographical level.⁸⁰ The scholarship of 'the critics' needs to be read with this aspect in mind.⁸¹

Ferguson noted that "Wölfflin's work contained a great deal of stimulating suggestions and its influence on later art criticism was very widespread".⁸² Similarly, Brown observed that "his works... are... animated by unsuspected conflicts and dynamisms".⁸³ It might be argued that 'the admirers' provoked and conditioned 'the critics' to some extent. Positive *laudatio* and negative critiques, misuses and misunderstandings⁸⁴ within the scholarship about Wölfflin went side by side for a while but eventually reached also a further position. A

⁷⁹ It is an important aspect for a discipline to constantly develop new topics and approaches, to engage with contemporary and new issues, to propel the evolution of the conceptual and the methodological discourses of the discipline. But this shows that this kind of criticism is problematic when Wölfflin's own discourse is constructed as it pertains to his ideas and not their after-effect and extension.

⁸⁰ 'The critics' extend and develop the theories; they also need to establish themselves in the discipline and thereby in the history of art history.

⁸¹ Of course, they present valid criticisms of Wölfflin and in this respect they are important, but, at the same time, these judgements manifest inherently conflicting critiques due to their own position within the history and theory of art history.

⁸² Ferguson (1948), p. 363.

⁸³ Brown (1982), p. 380.

⁸⁴ Wölfflin himself mentioned "misunderstandings" which distorted the sense of the 1915 book, in his 1920 article "In eigener Sache" (subtitled: 'Justification (*Rechtfertigung*) of my *Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe*'). The recognition of misinterpretations (*Missverständnisse*) was commented upon by 'the admirers' as well as by 'the critics' to legitimise their interpretation; Gerstenberg (1924); Waetzoldt (1924), p. 242; Grohmann (1934); Jedlicka (1944), p. 167; Christoffel (1946), p. 37;

more balanced view emerged, which became inevitable, in my opinion, because of the intensity of the earlier two phases of the scholarship on Wölfflin.⁸⁵ The third group of scholars, which I call 'the reconstructors', attempted interpretive accounts of Wölfflin within the more general setting of the historiography of art historical writing. I regard the analyses of this group as the more immediate predecessors to my own project.

"Some paradoxical quality", Brown noted, "has evidently kept Wölfflin's writings alive while concealing the nature of their vitality from his commentators".⁸⁶ The third group explores this 'paradoxical quality' and the 'nature of the vitality' of Wölfflin's ideas. 'The reconstructors' seek to re-evaluate Wölfflin's ideas. These analyses try to portray what Wölfflin intended, argued, and meant in his texts. The generational gap has widened enough⁸⁷. In the constant conflict of asserting and developing new ways of dealing with art history, 'the reconstructors' no longer engaged with Wölfflin directly (to establish and legitimise their own methods and approaches), but with the generation of 'the admirers' and 'the critics'.⁸⁸ In this sense, 'the reconstructors' produce re-evaluations and revisions of the

Sedlmayr (1964), p. 12, 15; Hart (1982), p. 292; (1995), p. 71. The idea of misinterpretations fosters all re-evaluations of Wölfflin, including the present thesis.

⁸⁵ My evaluation of the first two groups makes them almost irrelevant for my reconstruction of Wölfflin's themes and theories. Therefore, most of them are only mentioned here in the introduction but not in the chapters on Wölfflin's text. The inclusion of these fields of scholarship would have engaged necessarily the specific aspects of the various motivations, presuppositions and general approaches, which would have produced a study on mid-20th century scholarship which is not my objective.

⁸⁶ Brown (1982), p. 380.

⁸⁷ Between Wölfflin and the reconstructing scholars.

⁸⁸ One might think of this situation in terms of three subsequent generations: Wölfflin, followed by a generation of 'admirers' and 'critics', which in turn were followed by 'the reconstructors', the third generation, so-to-speak. On a more emotive level, one might say that in the rebellion against their fathers, the newest or third generation has re-discovered their grandfather. In this respect, Gantner (1955-1957) mentions a letter Croce wrote to Vossler in 1919, in which Croce described Wölfflin's art historical direction itself as "a reaction against the materialism, psychologism and

previous interpretations of Wölfflin's ideas. They usually concentrate on a particular aspect of Wölfflin's theories.

Already in 1955, Barth examined Wölfflin's philosophical background in an exemplary manner. In a newspaper article, Barth is not judging whether Wölfflin was right or wrong, but he is situating Wölfflin's ideas in a philosophical context. A balanced introduction and explanation of Wölfflin's theories within the historiographical arena was presented by Hüttinger.⁸⁹ Podro's evaluation of Wölfflin's ideas also situated the latter in the emerging discourse of art history in the 19th century, focusing on the philosophical heritage and emphasising to some extent the conflicts of the theories.⁹⁰ Warnke reconstructed the history of the immediate reception and reaction to the publication of the *Principles*, with references to the text and the historical surroundings.⁹¹ The position of Wölfflin's work within the history of art historical approaches has been explained and provided by Belting.⁹² Jarzombek⁹³ has presented interpretations of Wölfflin's doctoral dissertation, the *Prolegomena*, and Wiesing⁹⁴ has engaged in a detailed analysis of the *Principles*. A particular complex inquiry into the philosophical disposition of the *Principles* was recently undertaken by Eckl.⁹⁵ Wölfflin was the topic of two PhD theses in 1981, by Hart and Lurz respectively, who generated

biographism of the older historians" (my emphasis); in this sense, it was a generational reaction which prompted Wölfflin's "abstract art history" (p. 139).

⁸⁹ Hüttinger (1967).

⁹⁰ Podro (1982).

⁹¹ Warnke (1989), (1995). I limit my own comments on this issue in the following interpretation of the *Principles* because Warnke has already provided an excellent analysis in this regard.

⁹² Belting (2003).

⁹³ Jarzombek (1994; 2000).

⁹⁴ Wiesing (1997).

⁹⁵ Eckl (1996). Eckl's interpretation is an analysis of particular philosophical issues, in which Wölfflin's and Kant's (and other relevant thinker's) ideas are related, with the addition of extensions and supplements to the discussed theories which attempt to rectify problems or ambiguities identified in the specific themes.

extensive monographs.⁹⁶ Both analysed Wölfflin's major texts and worked with the archival material, in order to portray Wölfflin's 'intellectual biography' and formation through his University years and subsequent teaching career. Particularly Lurz relates Wölfflin's texts to each other to exemplify continuing and evolving trends and ideas. Adler explored and constructed the pedagogical context of Wölfflin within art history in Germany during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.⁹⁷

This prior scholarship prompted my own exploration and interpretation of Wölfflin. Its presentation here is a strategic aspect of the present thesis. Most of the texts by 'the admirers' and 'the critics' only increased my confusion about Wölfflin's ideas, and, consequently, led me to my own analysis of the textual material in order to find out both, what Wölfflin was saying, and where the misunderstandings stemmed from.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ Hart's dissertation was written in English, Lurz's in German. With this, they cater to different discourses. Lurz could delve into the German intellectual and philosophical discourses more deeply than Hart because these contexts are, naturally, more prominently known in the field of German art historical historiography.

⁹⁷ Adler (2004). Adler traces ideas of the painterly to the early 20th century revival of interest in Rembrandt (which had, of course, nationalistic reasons), which might have added to Wölfflin's system of the painterly and the linear in the *Principles* (p. 447ff).

⁹⁸ This means that it is relevant how Wölfflin has been interpreted but I wanted to come to my own evaluations and conclusions about his texts.

Jarzombek's comment "every art historian has read Wölfflin"¹ no longer holds true for the latest generation of scholars. Most art historians have heard of Wölfflin but, if they do not specialise in either Renaissance and Baroque studies or the historiography of art history, they most likely will not have read his texts. Today, Wölfflin's ideas are used and evaluated with less and less certainty, and more and more apparent over-familiarity. This condition led me back to the texts, in order to analyse and explore the primary sources directly.

The differing opinions about Wölfflin in the prior scholarship were my reason to focus on Wölfflin's texts and to search for problems, tensions and contradictions which might have provoked those differing critiques. This seems especially relevant in view of Warnke's comment that Wölfflin's "work always provoked people to take sides, for or against,... Even today, one can argue whether his theories are right or wrong. Wölfflin arouses emotions as if he had written but yesterday".²

Methodologically, my interpretation of Wölfflin's ideas is a textual analysis. The focus on the text is absolute. The analysis seeks to extrapolate and develop the implications of the texts. This is not deconstruction per se, but rather an attempt to understand and interpret the construction of the texts. This analysis is not a summary or a compilation of all the contents and issues raised in the texts, but a presentation of particular themes and arguments which I consider

¹ Jarzombek (1994), p. 68.

² Warnke (1989), p. 172.

significant. The textual analysis is, in this regard, my own interpretation as an original contribution.³

The present thesis stands in a relation to the hermeneutic tradition of interpreting textual material. The exploration of the published texts by Wölfflin is set in connection to the archival material and the surrounding intellectual milieu. An understanding of Wölfflin's ideas is gained through a reordering of what was tacitly known and jotted down in the notebooks but went unmentioned in the published texts. A particular field of examination is Wölfflin's terminology, with which a recollection of neglected uses and forgotten associations can be formed. The issue of the English translation is a significant problem in this respect. The German terminology is at a certain level untranslatable because its vocabulary has different meanings and connotations in the respective languages.⁴ There are usually no immediate English equivalents and parallels to the German words which led to the use of some German terms. Some awkward translations of the German terms should be excused, since some sort of approximation of the original phrasing was attempted. The two languages are not neutral; they both bear within them presuppositions and cultural assumptions of entirely different traditions of knowledge. In this sense, I try to communicate what the texts meant in the German-speaking discourse at the time Wölfflin wrote them. Koselleck's notion of *Begriffsgeschichte*, the history of terminology, was a model for my attempt to assemble the particularity of Wölfflin's vocabulary.

³ Of course, I refer to secondary sources if they capture or discuss what I want to argue and stress.

⁴ This issue is so complex in itself that it prompted an entire dissertation with regard to the French translation and meaning of Wölfflin's ideas in the text of the *Principles* by Wolfgang Müller (1969).

Wölfflin's texts are analysed as historical and historiographical documents which manifest the attitudes of the writer. The examination of themes and implications fosters the construction of the various contexts to form a Wölfflinian field. This interpretation seeks not to reformulate Wölfflin's ideas but to investigate the concerns and conditions for Wölfflin's work. In this sorting, the themes and implications of the texts are seen as pre-eminent elements within this discursive analysis.

In the idea of discourse, the notion of archive is emphasised as a configuration of a system of statements. In order to develop an understanding of the critical issues and the more general surrounding intellectual context, the discursive framework of the texts is conceived as a particular way of formulating knowledge in terms of a historical formation. An archaeology of Wölfflin's statements is constituted by uniting and relating the published texts with the notebooks. Interconnections will be identified to trace the organisation which shaped the ideas and theories. The operative terminology of these statements presents certain conventions and the disciplines within which the discourse is produced and circulated.

The rhetorical organisation of the discourse as text, as terminology and as language reflects the concept of intertextuality. In this respect, Wölfflin's ideas are linked to texts of other thinkers to create an interpretative field in which various thoughts and theories are seen to be developing and reacting to each other. He thinks against a certain intellectual background or net of thoughts of

contemporary and older thinkers.⁵ Wölfflin as an individual author is both a product of the surrounding intellectual heritage, and a generator of these traditions.

This historiographical analysis will have to dissect ideas which are deeply intertwined in the texts. The disentanglement of the sedimentation will hopefully make the concepts and theories more visible, and change the aspect under which they are seen. The separation of themes is an artificial analytical activity which then emphasises the nature of the connective criteria, in order to uncover Wölfflin's underlying subtext. The themes and implications of this interpretation are regarded from different points of view in the different texts, so that a certain overlapping is not avoidable.

⁵ The thesis does not attempt to present a critical interpretation of these thinkers as such. Their ideas and impact have been tailored to illuminate Wölfflin's concerns and emphasis and to clarify Wölfflin's texts and theories.

The three texts to be analysed are Wölfflin's doctoral dissertation, Prolegomena to a Psychology of Architecture (1886), Renaissance and Baroque (1888), and the Principles of Art History (1915). The relations, issues and problems of these texts will be explored in reference to Wölfflin's notebooks.

The introduction will outline the issues which have not been included. This is followed by the dominating themes of the analysis. Then, the arguments of the individual chapters and the overall arguments will be delineated. A section with biographical information, foremost a translation of Wölfflin's autobiography, will conclude this introductory section.

All three chapters have two parts. In the first, the themes and implications of the text will be elucidated with clarificatory remarks about the theories. In the second part, the surrounding discourses and references to various contexts will be presented. A summary of the prevalent problems of the texts will complete each chapter with an emphasis on the links to the next chapter.

In the conclusions to the thesis, the relations between the three texts will be portrayed. The arguments of each chapter will be connected to the overall arguments which frame the historiographical discourse of Wölfflin.

In the following interpretation I am not analysing the theme of national characteristics which was presented in the *Principles*, and which was taken up and extended by Wölfflin in the 1931 text *Italien und das deutsche Formgefühl* (*The Sense of Form in Art*), or more vaguely outlined in the earlier *Die Kunst Albrecht Dürers* (1905). This topic would need a substantial analysis of the 19th century concepts of the 'nation' and 'nationalism', which would take the thesis very much away from the domain of art history. The related idea of 'Italian Classicism', as presented by Wölfflin in *Die klassische Kunst* (1899), is not discussed because the issues involved form a vast field which I consider too complex and lengthy to be treated in passing and so had to be excluded. Nor am I attempting to examine the history of the reception or the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of Wölfflin's texts and ideas.¹ This includes both, the scholars who directly engaged with Wölfflin and developed ideas initially proposed by him further, and the thematic or more independent evolution and transformation of topics in which Wölfflin participated. Wölfflin's personal aesthetics, a question treated by many critics, will not be discussed due to the ambiguity of the issue. Nor is there a detailed commentary on the many articles Wölfflin published (in magazines and in his collections of essays) for it would limit the exploration of the selected texts and the more significant themes.² With regard to the three texts to be analysed, not all aspects could be incorporated. A mapping of the development of the terminology and the definition

¹ As mentioned before, this exploration is an entire thesis in itself.

² References, however, to individual articles will be made when it furthers the argument.

of the Classical, the Renaissance, and the Baroque in general terms is not presented.³ The themes of imitation and decoration in the *Prolegomena* and in *Renaissance and Baroque* had to be excluded because they would have lengthened the respective chapters tremendously. The individual five pairs of *Grundbegriffe* in the *Principles* are only discussed in their theoretical function as describing visual depictions of space; a detailed analysis of the content of each pair is not part of this interpretation.⁴

In this historiographical reconstruction of Wölfflin's discourse, the following topics are examined. Wölfflin's theoretical concerns and attitudes towards the fields of psychology, epistemology and ontology, aesthetics and the theory of history are each analysed in the various chapters. These interests shaped his terminology in his texts. The analysis of Wölfflin's language is itself a major theme: incorporating his anthropomorphic and bodily descriptions, the tracing of the idea of visuality from bodiliness, as well as the issues regarding the English translations. The interpretation of the semantic dimension is problematic because words and concepts evolve and are transformed over time. Today, we have different ideas about psychology, the body and anthropology than Wölfflin. The phrasing of Wölfflin's ideas encapsulates his fundamental theoretical and historical concern for the subject. More specifically, Wölfflin's language depicts the experience of the subject. This subject has a body and incorporates various roles, such as, artist, viewer (that is,

³ These terms are important art historical categories, but their own historical emergence and formation are too complex to be included in passing.

⁴ The five pairs are taken as particular characterisations of attitudes and ideals when issues of form and space are explored. In chapter three, the implications and the conditions of their theoretical structure are examined.

the spectatorship of the reader of the text), and historian. The subject is constituted in relation to the architectural and art historical object which is understood by Wölfflin in terms of form. A significant theme of this interpretation concerns the methodology employed in the texts. Wölfflin used the comparison of categories and of illustrations to foster and define his theories. Another topic for analysis is the relation between the texts. Issues were explored further in subsequent texts by Wölfflin, which leads to the implication of an overall development and a certain continuity of his ideas. The connections and the conceptual unfolding are mapped out in the conclusions to the thesis.

In the *Prolegomena*, Wölfflin developed a very theoretically driven investigation of the nature and the relation of the subject and the object in the architectural domain. He presents epistemological and ontological speculations about the body out of his concern for the subject's involvement in the architectural object. In this text, he implements and instrumentalises the aesthetic experience (Kant) and the *Erlebnis* (Dilthey) of architecture. Wölfflin produces an anthropomorphic and subject-driven language. The bodily terminology of the architectural descriptions shadows his theory of architecture. Architecture is based on the corporeality or bodiliness (*Körperlichkeit, Körperhaftigkeit*) of the subject and the object. More specifically, this embodied architecture is the expression of a will in form. For Wölfflin, architecture is a spatial effect experienced by the subject. The subject and object function, I argue, within a general 'aesthetics of perception and reception'. The text demarcates

Wölfflin's ideas, in my view, as a 'philosophical psychology project' in which he formulates 'the architectural search for self-knowledge' of the subject. All these aspects are programmatic and occur indirectly in the later texts.

In Renaissance and Baroque, Wölfflin extends and develops the ideas of the Prolegomena in a concrete historical location: 16th century Rome. His comparison of the architectural effects of the Baroque and the Renaissance is strongly influenced by Burckhardt. Contrary to Burckhardt, however, Wölfflin attempts to emancipate the Baroque from mere final phase of the Renaissance to an equal status and as an individual totality. Wölfflin's language and the historicity of bodiliness create multiple identities and functions of the categories of the Renaissance and the Baroque and their relation, namely as opposition, spectrum of possibilities, and development. The architectural sphere of the 19th century, was a condition and model for Wölfflin's historical analysis in terms of the dichotomous argumentation. The notebook entries attest to a certain *Verwissenschaftlichung* ('scientification') of the discipline which is expressed in the implied ideas of history as development and system. Wölfflin's effort to capture the bodiliness and the spatiality of the subject and architecture resulted in an extrapolation of 'history as *Wissenschaft*'.⁵ Although this analysis of 16th century architecture in Rome is located in a particular historical setting, my interpretation

⁵ The idea of *Wissenschaft* involves the notion of 'systematic scholarship', research (*Forschung*) and a more general form and area of inquiry than the English notion of 'science'. The concept is not limited to the natural sciences in the German context. The German term "is much broader than the narrow positivist understanding of science which typically characterises the English-speaking world" (Buci-Glucksmann, 1994, p. 1).

investigates the theoretical field and conditions of history-writing and *Wissenschaft*, which Wölfflin encapsulated in the text.

Similarly to *Renaissance and Baroque*, the *Principles* promote a problematic multiplicity of theoretical concerns, here the nature of *Grundbegriffe*. Simultaneously conceptual, categorical and historical notions, they are intended to circumscribe and define two modes of vision. Wölfflin's epistemological idea of the bodiliness of subject and object has been perpetuated, but in a limited or concentrated form, in the concept of visibility (*Sichtbarkeit*, *Anschaulichkeit*). The modes of vision are a co-ordinated integration of perception (*Wahrnehmung*), visualisation (*Vorstellung*, *Anschauung*) and depiction (*Darstellung*). The *Grundbegriffe* demarcate how a subject processes the visual experience of the organisation and composition of spatial forms in painting, sculpture, and architecture. The increase in photographic reproductions as illustrations in books and lectures (slides), I argue, prompted this shift from bodiliness to visibility in Wölfflin's theories. The experience of the illustrations establishes rhetorically and empirically the spatiality and visibility of the subject and object. The illustrations function not merely as a visual exemplification but rather, in my view, as the visual clarification and formulation of Wölfflin's conception of the *Grundbegriffe* as visual parameters. The two modes of the Classical and the Baroque, and the five pairs have thereby become concrete and historically situated visual worldviews of the subject.

Within the overall interpretation, the fundamental presupposition of the subject within Wölfflin's theories of architecture and of art history reflects, what I call, an 'aesthetics of perception and reception'. In this respect and with reference to the notebooks, I argue, that Wölfflin is working within a field dominated by anthropological questions about the subject within a cultural and historical sphere, that is, a *kulturgeschichtliche* anthropology or a *menschliche* (human) *Kulturgeschichte*. He is tracing different identities and traditions of bodiliness and visuality.

Secondly, Wölfflin's methods of speculation, of his language, of the comparisons and illustrations, all are congregated into a *wissenschaftliche* systematisation of art historical knowledge. The subjective participation and interpretation, and the objective analysis of historical works are intertwined. The experience of bodiliness and visuality constructs art historical knowledge as practice.

This complex connection between Wölfflin's theoretical and his historical concern is one of the most problematic dimensions in all three texts, leading to a third argument. In the textual analyses, several inconsistencies or logical errors, ambiguities and contradictions, multiple functions of terms, even the split between his intentions and formulations will be described. This problematic oscillation between theory and history in Wölfflin's ideas is not explored in order to show that Wölfflin's concepts are false but, to attest to a symptomatic tension within the emergent discipline of art history. The 'mixing' and the integration of diverse themes and issues, of what we today consider as belonging to different discourses and contexts, are the manifestation, in my view, of the

intellectual condition which Wölfflin inhabited. Wölfflin's theory of art history is a record of the difficulty of the discipline to reconcile two contradictory ideas: Kant's ahistorical and experiential notion of art and Hegel's ideas of history and the historicity of the subject and of aesthetic form. Wölfflin's attempt to dissolve this tension, which is an obstacle in his texts, can be productive, for it allows insight into some of the particular problems, concepts and complexities involved. In this regard, Wölfflin grapples with a constitutive tension which cannot be solved and which drives the discipline as such.

The autobiography¹ which Wölfflin wrote in April 1942², and which I present in the following pages in my own translation, provides ample information about Wölfflin's life and career, major books and ideas. At the time of his death, Wölfflin's estate (*Nachlass*) had already been divided to a certain extent; he had donated his library to the University of Zurich³. The remaining diaries and notebooks, drawings, letters and articles⁴, etc. were transferred to the Wölfflin-archive⁵ at the library of the University of Basle. More than 80 notebooks provide a glimpse of Wölfflin's thoughts, hopes and dreams, what Gantner called Wölfflin's "conversations with himself"⁶. The notebooks will feature prominently in the interpretation of Wölfflin's ideas and present a more personal discourse than his published articles and texts.

¹ Published by Gantner (1982), pp. 1-3, with letters and notebook entries.

² For his inauguration speech at the Austrian Academy of the *Wissenschaften*.

³ Wölfflin's library became the foundation for the library of the art history department in Zurich.

⁴ Joseph Gantner, a student of Wölfflin, was the administrator of the archive, who sorted the material, collected and added further literary data and information to it, such as letters by Wölfflin which the former addressees sent to Gantner, as well as articles about Wölfflin and reviews of later editions of texts. Gantner edited two books of this material. In 1982, the *Autobiographie, Tagebücher und Briefe*, and in 1989, *Jacob Burckhardt and Heinrich Wölfflin. Briefwechsel und andere Dokumente ihrer Begegnung 1882-1897*.

⁵ The Wölfflin-archive already held material from Wölfflin's father, Eduard.

⁶ Gantner (1960), p. 83.

I was born in Winterthur (Switzerland) on June 21st 1864. My father was a teacher of classical languages at the local high school (*Gymnasium*) and lectured at the same time at the University of Zurich. In 1875 he was called as professor to Erlangen, and later to Munich; I, thereby, came to Germany relatively early, went to school and did my doctoral dissertation there (Munich, 1886). My major subject was philosophy. I never studied art history properly or academically. Even if the topic of the dissertation ("Prolegomena to a Psychology of Architecture") already touched upon art, the decisive turn to this discipline came only in Rome, at a lengthy stay as a 'ragazzo' at the German Archaeological Institute on the Capitol (1886/87). The first product of my explorations there was a architectural-historical study: Renaissance and Baroque in Italy (1888). What attracted me to the issue was the relatively easy possibility to observe accurately developments of form, and the goal to search, in the 'wildness and capriciousness' generally attested to the Baroque, for distinct artistic laws. The example of Jacob Burckhardt's book as model for the text is unmistakable. His The Architecture of the Renaissance in Italy has influenced me the most, more than occasionally heard lectures by him on art history, with which I did not know what to do as a student. I may assume that from all my early work it was predominantly this book on the Baroque which recommended me to succeed Jacob Burckhardt in his position as art history lecturer [in Basel] (1893). That I was able to enjoy for five more years the personal contact with Burckhardt belongs to the most beautiful memories of my life.

In 1901, I came to Berlin, as successor to the noble, but soon after deceased, Hermann Grimm. Preceding this was a book on Classic Art in Italy (1899), in which I attempted to progress from individual characteristics of artists to a systematic and universal presentation of the nature of the classical style. The distinction between a way of thinking, of beauty, and image-form prepared for later questions and should have furthered the delineation of the specificity of this art. The contact with the sculptor Adolf Hildebrand, who wrote Problem of Form, was meaningful to me at the time.

Whoever wants to explore a large topic, such as Italian Classicism, has to summarise and is in danger of getting stuck in generalities. I may not suggest to have avoided this danger completely. Therefore I felt even more urged to a focused analysis, and by concentrating on one single personality, to seize the nature of an artistic oeuvre more distinctly. This personality became Albrecht Dürer (The Art of Albrecht Dürer, 1905). The book was praised at the time as being a progress in the analysis of formal situations and conditions. The fact that I chose Dürer was not an accident or chance but was based on reflections on the nationally particular. The detachment from Italian ideals happened only slowly, of course, and for the moment not completely. (Not until 1928, in my Nuremberg speech at the 400th commemoration of the death of Dürer, did I make my final formulations).

Starting back then, I was continually thinking about the question of national characters. In a larger context, that is, not focused on an individual personality, I explored the problem of the relation of the North to the South in the book Italy and the German Feeling of Form (1931).

This dominant theme is part of the Principles of Art History which was published already in 1915. Presupposing the fact that one can distinguish between distinct and similar phases within the larger historical demarcations, in the architectural styles, and in powerful individuals, a crucial task of art history seemed to me then to describe the developmental sequences, independent of quality and material which can be different. Apparently this is a lawful process, something psychological-rational. One has not to fear that art history in accepting this lawfulness will become mechanised or mechanistic: the phases simply describe the schemata which are possible in the most diverse articulations. But they are not empty capsules either; the modes of vision have, as forms of pleasure and as forms of depiction, their own life and their own power. Not necessarily from outside, but surely independently constituted on their part, do they intersperse the *geistige* life. And the value of the grand individual does remain untouched, because exactly these grand individuals make the latent possibilities of development reality.

This conception, in its essential content presented in 1915, has experienced several retouches and reformulations in the sense that the depicting and decorative development, although it is something specific, still always appears to be more connected to the general intellectual history (*Geistesgeschichte*). I consider this exploration as not yet finished.

Biographically, it has to be added that after 11 years of teaching in Berlin, I took over the art historical position in Munich in 1912 with which I was familiar and I valued from my own beginnings. The atmosphere of life changed tremendously because of the war, and accordingly, in 1924 the decision to accept the call to Zurich

(and Basle) was not difficult for me, to return to my homeland at the age of 60. In Zurich I taught a further ten years, but not anymore with the same passion and enthusiasm for teaching as at the earlier great institutions.

Recently, a little book was published, Gedanken zur Kunstgeschichte (1940), where I suggest what my contribution to art history has been. Throughout [the publication], principal and basic questions are examined, not questions of a history of artists, but of the history of art, with the tendency to allow the specific its place among the general conceptions of art.

Addition by JOSEPH GANTNER:

Three years after the compilation of this autobiography, Wölfflin died on July 19th 1945, at the beginning of his 82nd year. His ashes lie in the family grave on the Wolf-Gottesacker cemetery in Basle.

chapter one

Prolegomena zu einer Psychologie der Architektur

1886

(Prolegomena to a Psychology of Architecture)

philosophical psychology project

part one
THEMES & IMPLICATIONS
embodied architecture

part two
INVOLVED DISCOURSES
the architectural search for self-knowledge

This chapter presents an interpretation of Wölfflin's first publication, his doctoral dissertation entitled Prolegomena zu einer Psychologie der Architektur (Prolegomena to a Psychology of Architecture)¹ which was written, submitted, examined and published in 1886. The following analysis concentrates on the themes and problems Wölfflin investigated and created in his text. Central to his concerns is the understanding and knowledge of the object in art history. Wölfflin bases his argument about the properties and identity of the object on the aesthetic experience of the subject. This philosophical conception of the architectural object, as dependent upon and constituted by the subject, is explored in epistemological terms, by focusing on the structure of the human body and on the bodily processes of aesthetic experience and perception. Wölfflin's analysis of the body of the subject was undertaken within the field of late 19th century psychology which provided his inquiry with concrete empirical qualities and disclosed his philosophical and *wissenschaftliche* aspirations. By involving the theory of *Einfühlung*, empathy, the philosophical and psychological conditions of the subject are projected onto architecture. The physical experience of the architectural object prompts the subject to perceive architectural forms as a corporeal 'other', as another body, another subject, that is, as embodied architecture.

The argument will be made that, for Wölfflin, the concept of 'bodiliness' (*Körperlichkeit, Körperhaftigkeit*) unites subject and object. The body and bodiliness involve several aspects: firstly, the

¹ The English translation was published by H.F. Mallgrave and E. Ikonomou in their book Empathy, Form, and Space: Problems of German Aesthetics, 1873-1893, Santa Monica, 1994. All page references given subsequently in this thesis relate first to Wölfflin's text of the 1999 German edition and then to the 1994 English translation.

organic scheme of the organisation of the body, its verticality, horizontality and directionality. The constitution and form of the body figure prominently in the subject's experience and perception of architecture. Secondly, the physiological and psychological processes of the human body are attributed to the architectural object in ontological terms. Architectural form is understood as the expression of an inherent will and mood. The text exhibits an anthropological and anthropomorphic understanding of architecture which is based on the nature and mechanisms of the body. With the concept of bodiliness, changing and differing body-images which mark each subject's individuality are aligned across history, and with this the historicity and the discontinuity of the subject is transcended. A certain universal significance and continuity through time is obtained through bodiliness, in the similarity of the organic structure and constitution of the corporeal and anatomical body within 'human' culture and existence. Personal bodiliness is part of the common human bodiliness which in turn incorporates the cultural field of architecture. The complexity of these implications is problematic for the comprehension of the text. This diversity of meaning permeating through Wölfflin's dissertation and his theories reflects one of the main arguments of my interpretation of the Wölfflinian discourse which is characterised by a series of permanent inter-linking and categorical oscillations between concerns of the particular and the general, the subject and humanity or human culture, of philosophical abstraction or theory and of empiricism and experience, of the present and of the past (history), and, most prominently, between conceptual and historical intentions. The resulting contradiction in the text is

symptomatic of the struggles and tensions within the intellectual conditions of the emergent discipline of art history as a whole. German intellectual life of this era attempted to link the notion of art as aesthetic experience (Kant) and art as an historical formation (Hegel). The conflict between these fundamental elements of art history reflects the inherent nature of the discipline.

In the *Prolegomena*, Wölfflin developed his personal philosophical or experiential approach to art historical thinking, and, thereby, he also manifested a highly distinct theory of architecture. Architecture is understood through and according to the body. Wölfflin's definition of architecture as bodily form, will and expression involves a conception of architecture as a spatial effect, as spatiality which is manifested by the subject. This involvement of the subject suggests a theory which amounts to a conceptual and historical exploration of feelings and sensations, experiences and responses of the subject towards architectural objects and space. Wölfflin, I argue, adhered to and pursued throughout his life an 'aesthetics of perception and reception' which is primarily substantiated by the bodiliness of the subject.² This theme is also found in the unpublished, archival material of Wölfflin's notebooks which show his interest and intention to work within the field of the cultural history of the subject, to practice a *Kulturgeschichte des Menschen*. The *Prolegomena* functions as 'the architectural search for self-knowledge of the subject'. The definition and the conception of architecture encapsulate this concern with the subject. Wölfflin's

² This theme will be explored further in the other two texts to be interpreted in the following chapters.

entire art historical thinking is categorically predicated upon this. The subject, *der Mensch*, is the quintessential presupposition and premise to Wölfflin's ideas and theories. It directs and establishes his approach to and his methodology of art history.

In part one of this chapter, the significant themes and implications of the text are presented. Starting with his philosophical concept of aesthetic experience, its relation to Kant's ideas is emphasised before Dilthey's notion of *Erlebnis* (lived experience) in terms of historical access, is explored. The examination of the language of Wölfflin's architectural descriptions exemplifies a certain physical and anthropomorphic dimension which concerns the bodily experience of the subject, as well as the bodily understanding of the architectural object. The various elements of Wölfflin's conception of the body (the difference between the body and the imagination, bodily response, bodily *Einfühlung* (empathy), the body in relation to clothing, the psychological body and the architectural body) all exhibit this central concern for bodiliness. A brief glance at the field of psychology as practised by philosophers, and a portrayal of the discipline of architecture in the late 19th century, attempt to make Wölfflin's idea of a 'psychology of architecture' more intelligible. Despite these theoretical issues, the study and analysis of architectural history is the framework for Wölfflin's text. The interpretation of the use of the bodiliness of subject and object as an instrument for the historical understanding of architecture and culture concludes this first part of the chapter.

In the second part of this chapter, the intellectual contexts of the text are examined. The multiplicity of the relevant fields of

knowledge was crucial for the emerging discipline of art and architectural history for Wölfflin. My interpretation of the text as being a 'philosophical psychology project' is related to the terrain of a cultural history of the human subject, *Kulturgeschichte des Menschen* or *kulturgeschichtliche* anthropology, to which Wölfflin refers again and again in his notebooks. The 1886 text is read as Wölfflin's critique of conventional architectural theory and the art historical scholarship of his time. Finally, my interpretation of Wölfflin's doctoral thesis attempts to highlight problems and conflicts of the text. This chapter concludes with a recapitulation of those arguments and aspects of Wölfflin's theories in the *Prolegomena*, which provide links to the themes and issues of the next chapter.

embodied architecture

Wölfflin's Prolegomena is a text about the epistemological and *wissenschaftliche* foundations of his art historical thinking. While he did not venture into a philosophical analysis of epistemology as such, he participated in current debates on empathy theory. Particularly in his speculations about the body, Wölfflin developed a specific conception of the subject. Indeed, his entire art-historical thinking is structured around the category of the subject, amounting to an 'aesthetics of perception and reception'. Wölfflin's whole approach to architecture is conditioned by its reference to a physical engagement of the subject, or more precisely, by the bodiliness of subject and object.

The Prolegomena contains a specific psychological assumption, namely that buildings or architectural objects "express" emotional moods which the subject aesthetically experiences as "impressions" and "effects".¹ He wrote in his notebook: "notes for dissertation: ... 4. expression and impression".² The notion of expressions, effects and impressions are all connected; which means that it is the subject that receives and recognises impressions as expressions and as effects of the object. One crucial aspect of the implications of this epistemological system is the notion of 'experience': for the subject 'experiences' the object when impressions, effects and expressions are involved. The nature of this

¹ Prolegomena, p. 7/150.

experience is a relevant issue for Wölfflin, and the conception of an object constituted by the experience of the subject relates to Kant's notion of aesthetic experience.

KANT

In his third critique, Kritik der Urteilkraft (Critique of Judgement) (1790), Kant saw aesthetic experience as the "apprehension of forms of an object in the imagination", as "reflective perception" and as an "empirical judgement" by the subject.³ Kantian aesthetic judgement or experience concerns reflection upon the form of an object by a subject. Podro noted that "Kant in effect makes his philosophical starting point a notion of *Vorstellung* or an 'idea'. This 'idea' can be thought of as the interface between the experiencing mind, the subject, and something in the world, an object".⁴ Kant argues that the object in itself is something which is unknowable. Podro noted that

the mere momentary 'idea' or 'experience' only yields knowledge, indeed only takes on the character of being the experience of an independent object, by virtue of the way our own mind places that idea or experience in a framework of time and space, and connecting it with other ideas, gives them the structure of being an object with properties, causally interacting with other objects. ... [It is] difficult for Kant to talk unambiguously about an object independent of our mind ...: a way of *attending* to the object is for Kant very hard to distinguish from a way of *constructing* the object out of the material of experience and the activity of the mind.⁵

Kant stated: "sensation (here the external [sensation]) reveals the merely subjective of our imagination of things external to us, but actually [also] the materiality (reality) of them (through which

² Notebook 10 (1885), p. 21. "Notizen zur Dissertation: ... 4. Ausdruck und Eindruck".

³ Kant (1790), Introduction chapter VII; pp. 48ff (of 2001 German edition). "Auffassung der Form eines Gegenstandes der Anschauung" (p. 49), "reflektierte Wahrnehmung" (p. 51), "Urteil empirisch" (p. 52).

⁴ Podro (1972), p. 9.

⁵ Podro (1972), p. 10.

something existing is given)...".⁶ This means sensations of something external to the subject stimulate ideas about it in the imagination. Such sensations also *imply* a material or empirical reality to the external object, which can, however, never be known 'in-itself'. Knowledge of the object and its external reality and materiality (as thing-in-itself) is gathered and organised (as knowledge) in the process of perception.

While Kant does not provide a fuller description of his conception of experience in the Critique of Judgement, two implications⁷ can already be seen in the third critique, looking at it from Wölfflin's point of view. First, aesthetic experience is the experience of an object by the subject, be it reading a novel, listening to an opera, looking at a painting or walking around (in) a building. One can presuppose⁸ that the object of the aesthetic experience has some physical presence, because the subject engages in a relation (reading, seeing, hearing, etc.) with the object. A second implication is the abstract constitution of a judgement, that is Kant's "reflective perception"⁹. This response (to the object) is 'situated' in the mind, and, more concretely, in the representation (*Vorstellung*)¹⁰ of the subject.¹¹ Feelings of the subject are affected

⁶ Kant (1790), introduction chapter VII, p. 48f (of 2001 German edition). "*Empfindung (hier die äußere) drückt ebensowohl das bloß Subjektive unserer Vorstellungen der Dinge außer uns aus, aber eigentlich das Materielle (Reale) derselben (wodurch etwas Existierendes gegeben wird)*". My translation of the original text.

⁷ It lies in the nature of implications that they are speculations and explorations in a direction in which the text is not directly clear or specifically directed. The present interpretation of Kant's text in view of Wölfflin's theories automatically limits, but, on the other hand, concentrates on intertextual relations which present Kant in the light of a specifically Wölfflinian reading.

⁸ One should remember that the perception of an opera is here the experience of a live performance, not the experience of a recording; a painting is the original painting, not a poster or a postcard of it, nor an illustration in a book, nor the slide projection of it against a wall in an enlarged dimension.

⁹ Kant (1790), introduction chapter VII, p. 51 (of 2001 German edition).

¹⁰ Kant (1790), introduction chapter VII.

¹¹ Kant (1790), § 1, p. 67 (of 2001 German edition).

by the experience of the object.¹² For Kant, the aesthetic experience is related to the operational mode of apperception¹³ working within the faculty of judgement. The empirical reception in the experience of the senses triggers accompanying emotional responses (for Kant, the feeling of pleasure or pain in the realm of the beautiful, awe or fear in the case of the sublime).

The first element of Kant's third critique, the empirical experience of the object as an aesthetic experience, is of pivotal importance for Wölfflin. The object prompts a sensation (*Empfindung*), an "empirical perception" and response in the subject.¹⁴ The object exists to a certain degree, as an idea (*Vorstellung*) in the imagination of the subject. This does not mean the object exists solely as a mental conception. The idea of the object in the imagination of the subject is evidence for and the product of that process of perception in which the subject interacted with an external object. The object is, therefore, an empirical phenomenon of perception for the subject, it has a definite physical or material reality about it.

As for architecture, we should always recall that experience of architecture at that time was predominantly a direct, three-dimensional experience of the object, of a building. A two-dimensional experience through photographs or drawings was the only other medium¹⁵ of experience of architecture, and it is a

¹² Kant (1790), introduction chapter VII, p. 52 (of 2001 German edition).

¹³ Kant (1790), introduction chapter VII, p. 51 (of 2001 German edition). "*reflektierte Wahrnehmung*". Cf. Kant (1781), § 16.

¹⁴ Kant (1790), introduction chapter VII, p. 48 (of 2001 German edition).

¹⁵ There is, of course, the matter of architectural models. In this regard, I would argue that models were considered at this time as a form of reproduction, or rather pre-production of the building, which, nevertheless, remained a dimension removed

different and, perhaps, a secondary mode. Wölfflin does not clarify his notion of architecture as a physical object in distinction to the two-dimensional presentation of architectural forms; indeed, he could probably not afford to because his entire thesis is based on this three-dimensional and physical experience as characteristic of and defining architecture.¹⁶ Architecture was understood by Wölfflin as physical object and not as image because a two-dimensional depiction cannot provide a corporeal, physical experience.

Wölfflin would have to argue that the experience of illustrations, such as architectural photographs and drawings, could not be compared to the experience of actual buildings, because they are experienced in a different register, as visual pre- or reproductions¹⁷ of the object. Wölfflin did not make these distinctions, nor did he include any discussion of the prevalent three-dimensionality of the architectural object. But he himself concentrated exclusively on the experience of actual and existing buildings in his text.

and separate from the real, functioning, built and material structure of the building as intended by its architect. Architectural models have a different reality, function, construction and materiality than buildings for actual human inhabitation and use within the discourse of the theory and practice of architecture.

¹⁶ The admission or mentioning of other ways or modes to experience architecture, namely presented on a flat surface, would have weakened Wölfflin's speculations about architecture in general. This is most likely the reason why he did not use any illustrations in the text; a plan, for instance, of the Michaelskirche in Hildesheim which he discussed in the text (*Prolegomena*, p. 32/174) would have presented the rhythmicity of the nave piers and columns in visual form; but an illustration is exactly the manifestation of architecture which would not prompt the physical experience of this rhythmicity as Wölfflin was describing it in the text. The absence of illustrations helps and actually indirectly emphasises Wölfflin's argument about the experiential function and character of architecture in relation to the epistemological conception of the nature of the corporeal perception of the subject.

¹⁷ The notion of 'pre-production' is intended to imply the planning and design stage, where plans and drawings depict facades, for instance, before they are actually built. 'Reproduction', on the other hand, denotes the visual depiction of an existing, constructed structure, in terms of drawings or photographs.

The second Kantian implication, that the formation of the aesthetic response or judgement is processed in the mind or the imagination, is a fundamental point of departure for Wölfflin. Wölfflin questions and explores the exact nature of this aesthetic reception and response in the subject. While for Kant the aesthetic experience was not a process of conception (with concepts, *Begriffe*)¹⁸ and of cognition and understanding (in the faculty of reason)¹⁹, Wölfflin himself does attach an epistemological dimension of understanding and knowledge to the aesthetic experience.²⁰ When Kant considered the harmony and interplay of the faculties, meaning the mind's capacity to unify and order its experiences and impressions, he was exclusively concerned with the mental framework of the subject. But Wölfflin includes the body as almost another faculty of the subject, to grasp aesthetic experience.

Wölfflin utilised an ambiguity in Kant to his advantage. The aesthetic experience is extended to the body. The subject's experience of the object is bodily. The body functions as the mechanism by which the subject understands itself and gains knowledge about objects, that is, how the subject processes both perception and conception through the body. Wölfflin's notion of the body can be related to Kant's *sensus communis*, in the sense that bodiliness is regarded as an innate property, present in everyone, and governed by an inner necessity. The body is an

¹⁸ Kant (1790), introduction chapter VII, p. 50 (of 2001 German edition).

¹⁹ Kant (1790), introduction chapters II, III, V, Kant distinguished three dimensions of philosophy: aesthetic judgement being one apart from the other two faculties, of knowledge and of moral reason. Also book I, § 1, p. 68 (of 2001 German edition).

²⁰ Kant's term 'apperception' (*Apperzeption*) has today two meanings, on which Wölfflin's interpretation hinges: first, it is a conceptually evaluative, judgmental comprehension, in the field of philosophy (*begrifflich urteilendes Erfassen*), second, it is a conscious perception, in the field of psychology (*bewusstes Erfassen*). Kant used the term in the second sense only, while Wölfflin's text implies both meanings. Cf. Müller (2000), p. 31.

apriori category for Wölfflin, through which all subjects substantiate and participate in the world.

While Kant explored aesthetic experience in the fields of philosophy, epistemology and art, Dilthey, Wölfflin's University professor in Berlin, developed the idea of *Erlebnis* (lived experience) in which the experience of the subject was considered a constitutive foundation for a knowledge of history. Wölfflin utilised his teacher's notion of *Erlebnis* to argue and affirm the universal aspect of the bodily experience and comprehension of architecture across history.

ERLEBNIS

To understand Wölfflin's notion of experience, it is important to explore Dilthey's ideas of '*Erlebnis*' and the discourse in which this notion evolved. Wilhelm Dilthey worked in the domain of *Geisteswissenschaften*, the 'human sciences', which he attempted to define as an "independent system", in distinction to the natural sciences (*Naturwissenschaften*).²¹ For Dilthey, there existed a categorical difference between *naturwissenschaftlichem ERKLÄREN*, the explanation of the world and its existence through the natural sciences (mathematics, physics, etc.), and *geisteswissenschaftlichem VERSTEHEN*, the understanding of the world and existence in and by the human sciences (religious, philosophical, literary, historical studies, etc.).²² History was regarded as an empirical discipline, sharing methods of inquiry with the physical sciences, such as observation and classification, framing and testing of hypotheses.²³

²¹ Dilthey (1883), preface; book 1.

²² Balmer (1982), p. 5.

²³ Dilthey (1962), p. 33.

Erleben, experiencing, and *verstehen*, understanding, were the principles of interpretation and conception (*Auffassung*) of reality and specifically of the *geisteswissenschaftliche* world of objects²⁴ which include the aesthetic and historical spheres to be discussed here. While Dilthey proclaimed a fundamental difference between the natural sciences and the *Geisteswissenschaften*, he nevertheless employed elements of the natural sciences, such as the experimental method that epitomised the relevance of empirical study and empirical reality, for his demarcation of the *Geisteswissenschaften*.²⁵ But for Dilthey it was impossible within the humanities to discover general laws for the totality of the world and human existence, as in the natural sciences and metaphysics.²⁶ Only individual connections [*Einzelzusammenhänge*] could be identified.²⁷ The aspect of '*Zusammenhang*', relation, connection or coherence, was an important issue for him.²⁸ The notion of coherence predicates the understanding of "something internal through the analysis of its outward manifestation".²⁹ Dilthey based this idea on his view that "the understanding of other persons and life-expressions is built on our own experience and on our understanding of it, and on

²⁴ Balmer (1982), p. 139.

²⁵ The mere utilisation of the standard and typically *wissenschaftliche* method of describing data gained from empirically experienced reality weakened Dilthey's distinction between the natural sciences and *Geisteswissenschaften*, because of the fact of the similarity of this empiricism. Dilthey's goal to define a specific area for the humanities, categorically had to be *wissenschaftlich* in order to be on a different level than the previous studies within the various disciplines of the humanities. The very term *Geisteswissenschaften*, 'sciences of the humanities', pays witness to this *Verwissenschaftlichung*, scientification, of the humanities during the 19th century. Dilthey and his theories reflect the conscious need for the theorisation and thereby also the legitimisation of these fields of knowledge as significant and relevant within the academic institutionalisation of knowledge in the Universities in the 19th century.

²⁶ Dilthey (1883), book 2. He criticised the entire history ("the rise and fall, *ihre Herrschaft und ihr Verfall*") of metaphysics and declared them finished and obsolete.

²⁷ Schade (1963), p. 89.

²⁸ Dilthey (1883), book 1, chapter IX.

²⁹ Holborn (1927), p. 145.

the continuous interplay of experience and understanding".³⁰ "Because our lived experience includes the experience of expressing ourselves, of objectifying our own mental activity, we are able to understand objectifications not only of our own mental activities, but also, by projection, of those of others"³¹, and indeed of other objects. Since the aesthetic object was considered as an expression and capture of human life, a medium of *Lebensverständnis*, it was an organ to understand life. Dilthey's concept of life, his *Lebensbegriff*, was predicated on experience itself. Experiences, *Erlebnisse*, consist of internal and external connections for the subject.³² Such experiences establish psychological and historical connections intersubjectively, between subjects and across time.³³ Human conditions and objects have to be experienced, *erlebt*; expression(s) of life, *Lebensäußerungen* and *Lebensausdruck*, then could be psychologically and historically understood because they can be (potentially) re-experienced.³⁴ The concepts of the life-experience and its expression were considered as epistemological structures linked to the general identity of the subject based on the "totality of its anthropological or human nature".³⁵ As such they involve the possibility of the re-experience of the *Erlebnisse* and the life of other subjects from other historical times. *Erlebnisse*, experiences and events prompt the "historical imagination" to construct an historical interpretation, in terms of a *Hineinversetzen*, a 'putting oneself into'

³⁰ Gardiner (1959), p. 213. Quotation taken from the translated essay "The Understanding of Other Persons and Their Life-Expressions" by Dilthey (originally published in vol. VII of Dilthey's *Gesammelte Schriften*).

³¹ Donagan and Donagan (1965), p. 18f.

³² Dilthey (1883), book 1, chapter XIII. The term 'internal' means within the subject, 'external' meaning with the exterior world, reality.

³³ Balmer (1982), p. 142.

³⁴ Balmer (1982), p. 140. It is never, of course, the exact same experience which is made. But similarity and resemblance allow for a certain approximation.

the historical situation.³⁶ This comprehension of historical life could only be achieved with epistemological foundations in anthropology and psychology.³⁷ Leading the investigation into the past for Dilthey is the philosopher-historian-psychologist, who "has to start with the meaning that historical characters had given to *their* age", with the material expressions of *their* experience of *their* reality; "for that was the process whereby life became organised and known".³⁸ Dilthey's epistemology was based on the subject's relation to reality (*Verhältnis zur Wirklichkeit*) which is an experienced reality. Experience constitutes the subject's ability to recognise and know (*erkennen*) itself as the subject of life and reality, of society and with historicity³⁹. Dilthey's theories of knowledge about experience amount to a 'critique of historical reason' with reference to Kant's critiques.⁴⁰ The historical-social reality of the subject could be examined across the disciplines of anthropology and sociology but foremost of psychology, through a close examination of the connection and coherence of interior and exterior experiences and expressions.

Dilthey employs the experimental method to analyse impressions of aesthetic objects for their effect in regard to the historical subject. The definition of the art object and the reality of the art object were for him dependent on being both a product of the artist's psyche and on being an effect on the spectator's

³⁵ Dilthey (1883), preface, p. XVIII (of vol. 1, *Gesammelte Schriften*). "die ganze Menschennatur", "Totalität unseres Wesens".

³⁶ Dilthey (1962), p. 43.

³⁷ Dilthey (1883), book 1, p. 32 (of vol. 1, *Gesammelte Schriften*). "...ist Anthropologie und Psychologie die Grundlage aller Erkenntnis des geschichtlichen Lebens".

³⁸ Jarzombek (2000), p. 61. Jarzombek's emphasis.

³⁹ Schade (1963), p. 89.

⁴⁰ In this respect, Dilthey posits experience, expression, and the understanding of expressions in terms of apriori categories as epistemological aspects of the 'faculty of historical reason'.

psyche.⁴¹ Experience is an objectification (*Vergegenständlichung*), the establishment of the object by and for the subject. The 'experienceability' (*Erfahrbarkeit*) and the actual experience provide criteria for perception and knowledge (in an epistemological sense), *Erkenntnis*, of the reality of objects and thereby of history. Dilthey's *Erlebnisphilosophie*, philosophy of experience, was a "general science of man, a cultural anthropology, [which] will find human nature revealed in experience and in the revival of past experience".⁴² *Person und Gesellschaft*, the subject and society, were the *Grundwirklichkeiten*, the basic realities, in which the individual human being was considered to be a psycho-physical life-unit(y), *psycho-physische Lebenseinheit*.⁴³

The term *Erlebnis*, as personally lived experience, shares in an essentially ambiguous and divided sphere of the meaning of *Wissenschaft*. It combines, on the one hand, the *wissenschaftliche* relevant notions of experimentation, objectivity, repeatability and knowledge (*Wissen*), and, on the other hand, the phenomenological and subjective character of experience, which includes perception, cognition and knowledge (*Erkenntnis*). The two domains establish a fundamental conceptual tension which at first might appear to be resolved in Wölfflin's notion of the body. But, on closer inspection, the complex diversity of the properties of Wölfflin's concept of the body⁴⁴ only highlights this tension in his reasoning and in the text. The significance of Dilthey's theories⁴⁵ exhibits an inter-textual dimension

⁴¹ Schade (1963), p. 105.

⁴² Masur (1952), p. 97.

⁴³ Dilthey (1883), book 1, chapter VIII. Schade (1963), p. 128.

⁴⁴ The ambiguity and conflict between various notions of the body will be outlined in more detail in the following sections.

⁴⁵ The importance of Dilthey's conception of history will be related to the *Prolegomena*'s theme of history later in this chapter.

to the understanding of Wölfflin's notion of 'experience', which prepared the ground for the idea of bodiliness.

By the end of the 19th century, reflection and psychological self-reflection upon the epistemological status of the understanding of the subject with regard to aesthetics and metaphysics were undertaken not only by philosophers but also by psychologists and historians. Dilthey and Wölfflin in the Prolegomena were examples of this. In this context, the relevance of Dilthey's *Erlebnis* to Wölfflin's Prolegomena becomes apparent. The experience of architecture as a physical reality is one of the conditions, which allows Wölfflin to think about the nature of architecture through the subject. This experience is transformed by him into a theory of physical, psychological and mental corporeality and bodiliness. The experience, that is, the empirical and bodily encounter between the subject and the architectural object, constitutes a particular connection for Wölfflin which provides the subject with the knowledge and the understanding of architecture. Wölfflin's terminology in his description of architecture directly relates to this sphere of experience of the bodily condition of subject and object.

WÖLFFLIN'S LANGUAGE

The language Wölfflin uses to describe architecture is certainly highly distinct. Mark Jarzombek noted that Wölfflin "discussed buildings as if they were human bodies".⁴⁶ Many objects are transposed into general bodily circumstances, especially of "*Ruhe und Streben*", repose and striving, movement.⁴⁷ The language

⁴⁶ Jarzombek (1994), p. 42.

⁴⁷ Prolegomena, p. 25/168.

Wölfflin employed to describe architecture crucially consists mostly of adjectives and verbs that denote bodily actions and activity, physical and mental conditions, states and situations of the human subject. This terminology is based on the play between objects and emotions, for instance, "the round arch is happier, more cheerful than the pointed arch".⁴⁸ Wölfflin compared architecture directly to human physiognomy: "windows are organs similar to our eyes ... the portion above the windows appears as forehead to us".⁴⁹ The language of the body was a mechanism for both perceiving and interpreting architecture. The bodily descriptions substantiate (*vergegenständlichen*) and make the architectural objects present (*vergegenwärtigen*) and similar to the subject. Wölfflin wrote in a notebook: "anthropomorphic conception, only in the perception of architecture does it gain human life"⁵⁰.

The physiognomical analogies of his architectural language are recognised by Wölfflin in everyday language; he explains that "with logical consistency we say: there *lies* the picture gallery and here *stands* the tower".⁵¹ This may seem to be metaphorical, but the terminology is employed to such an intense degree that we may understand it literally.

The bodily factors of this language make up the 'character' of the architectural object. In 19th century terms, the notion of character is a complex of mental and physical elements that make up the personality of the subject. The physicality and physiological structure of the body and the materiality of the architectural object

⁴⁸ *Prolegomena*, p. 35/177.

⁴⁹ *Prolegomena*, p. 34/176.

⁵⁰ Notebook 11 (1885/86), p. 74. "anthropomorphe Auffassung. Erst in der Perzeption gewinnt das Architektonische menschliches Leben)".

⁵¹ *Prolegomena*, p. 26/168. Emphasis by Wölfflin.

become the connective tissue for the analogical use of the descriptive language by which architecture is made to exhibit an anthropomorphic character.

The psychological language becomes one of the conditions for viewing architecture as an object which has faculties we normally associate with the subject: character, experiences, expressions of ideals, desires, moods and so on. Wölfflin mentions in his notebook that "language equals apriori human reason".⁵² This means he was aware of the constitutive factor of language in the structure and understanding of reality and the perception and conception processes of the subject. Wölfflin directly refers to the anthropomorphic bodiliness of the architectural object in the *Prolegomena*: "wherever a finite entity presents itself, we give it a head and foot, look for front and back, etc."⁵³ He insists that "we read our own image (*Bild*) into all phenomena".⁵⁴ The human image is projected onto architecture, as, for instance, in the names for the elements of the architectural orders.⁵⁵ The language mirrors a central "pantheistic apprehension of the world" as developed by Volkelt to which Wölfflin refers in the text.⁵⁶ Wölfflin defines the basic elements of architecture, matter and form, gravity and force, by reference to Schopenhauer, as made up of the corporeal understanding and consciousness based on the bodily organisation of the subject.⁵⁷ Understanding architecture is based on the same

⁵² Notebook 9 (1885), p. 1. "Sprache = apriori menschliche Vernunft".

⁵³ *Prolegomena*, p. 10/152.

⁵⁴ *Prolegomena*, p. 10/152. The notion of "image, *Bild*" implies an ideal and an imagined conception of the body by the subject.

⁵⁵ Cf. Wölfflin's description of the Doric temple (*Prolegomena*, p. 36/179) or Ionic architecture in his seventh chapter on ornaments (p. 38/179).

⁵⁶ *Prolegomena*, p. 11/154.

⁵⁷ *Prolegomena*, p. 15/157f.

language used to characterise the body of the subject, in terms of standing, holding up, reaching, etc. .

Apart from Wölfflin, this anthropomorphic terminology in art historical texts is also found in the work of Brunn. Brunn, who was teaching classical archaeology at the University of Munich where Wölfflin took classes with him, described ancient sculpture, mostly Olympian gods, in psychological terms with verbs and adjectives which evoked human action and feeling.⁵⁸ This created an immediate point of connection for his students and readers as a verbal performance of the works of art. For Brunn, this aspect of description allowed a "deeper and more refined understanding of art and its history".⁵⁹ He wanted to grasp "the spirit of the whole as expressed in the individual work of art".⁶⁰ This, of course, relates to the expression of ideas, feelings and actions of the subject in the art object.

Wölfflin's physiognomical language "provides the locus of a universal experience ... that unites object and viewer around the symmetrically placed axis of experience", Jarzombek continues,

Wölfflin, as master of this interplay, made the words sound natural and effortless. His 'descriptions', appearing simply to tell the reader 'what is there', were filled with subtle empathetic directives aimed at achieving an ontological unity of mind and object.⁶¹

The bodiliness of the subject correlates the subject to the architectural object, psychologically and linguistically. For Wölfflin, "one's own bodily and emotional self-experience determines the experience of objects in general and of aesthetic objects in

⁵⁸ Brunn (1885), (1893).

⁵⁹ Brunn (1885), p. 2.

⁶⁰ Brunn (1898), p. viii. This is a particular aspect of Brunn which Wölfflin attempts to emulate further in *Renaissance and Baroque*.

⁶¹ Jarzombek (1994), p. 36.

particular"⁶²; this frames the terminology in which architectural structures are described. The object, architecture, appears to be similar to the subject's own ontological identity, in its corporeality. Wölfflin's term of "*Formensprache* (language of forms)"⁶³ precisely implies the activity of articulation or expression of the architectural forms, in parallel to the subject.⁶⁴ For Wölfflin in the late 19th century, the notion of language, as an action of the subject of communication and expression, fitted nicely with his theory of aesthetic forms. The Wölfflinian concept of *Formensprache* implicates form in terms of the subject that expresses its identity and its will. On a larger scale, a nation also employs this language of form to express its identity, ideals and will; Wölfflin concludes: "what a nation has to say, it always says".⁶⁵ In this conception of language, architecture is seen as something related and similar to the subject.

This subject-driven terminology of the text has three important consequences. Firstly, the bodily language not only provides a theory of knowledge in terms of what it means to understand and to

⁶² Zöllner (1998), p. 46.

⁶³ *Prolegomena*, p. 42/185.

⁶⁴ It should be remembered that architectural theory in the 18th century, particularly within the French discourse, already had conceived and explored the notion of an 'architecture parlante'. A 'speaking architecture' implies the notion of language. But there is a crucial distinction to be made between Wölfflin and the theories of the 18th century. For while Durand, Boullée and Ledoux examined the specific combination of structural and decorative elements for an historical interpretation and classification of architectural form, they understood form as sign or symbol in a typological sense, expressing the function and purpose of a building as type through history. Wölfflin, on the other hand, regards architectural form as an expression, as psychological manifestation of its being. The monument (Cenotaph) to Newton designed by Boullée (ca. 1784), for instance, represents to the 18th century the law of gravity as the principle of the physical world, the globe as earth and universe. The reality of the subject in terms of scale is utterly diminished because the human dimension is not important. It is a celebration of the intellectual power of knowledge over the world and over humanity. Its size has to dwarf any individual subject. The psychology of this architectural form, in a Wölfflinian sense, would probably entail a different interpretation of the sphere as the ultimate balance, and calm repose, which exhibits the notions of eternal and universal rest in this commemorative monument to Newton. Although the structure is supposedly huge, it can still be related to the individual subject, Newton himself.

⁶⁵ *Prolegomena*, p. 42/185.

know, that is, in terms of experience, but secondly, indicates also the bodily perception, with focus on the neurological and the physical (muscular and chemical) processes of the organism, the nervous system, the senses, and the motor-sensory workings in the body. The workings of the body are relevant when architecture is experienced by the subject; they offer insight into the intuitive perception and understanding of the architectural object. The bodily perception of the object gives rise to the anthropomorphic language which is used to characterise the architecture. This demarcates the third aspect of Wölfflin's terminology, the implication of his architectural theory of bodiliness, in which architecture is related to the bodily expression of a will and the bodily form of the subject as scheme of organisation.⁶⁶

It may appear as if Wölfflin simply produces an architectural language which anthropomorphises the objects. However, I would like to propose, that he does more than that. He develops in the *Prolegomena*, a particular way of describing and conceiving aesthetic objects which he employs for the rest of his life. The three implications of the terminology complicate the understanding of Wölfflin's ideas in later texts especially when the theoretical element of the bodiliness of the language is not immediately traceable. This particular conception of works of art and architecture was later on not rationalised at all. In the later texts Wölfflin not only describes architecture through this subject-driven language, but also figural sculpture and painting⁶⁷, and the visual experience of photographic reproductions⁶⁸. The bodily projection is for Wölfflin an instinctual

⁶⁶ More on Wölfflin's theory of architecture in the sections on 'the architectural body' and 'architecture' later in this chapter.

⁶⁷ Wölfflin's particular ways of describing paintings, or rather the forms and spatial compositions of paintings will be discussed in more detail in chapter three.

⁶⁸ Particularly in the *Principles* (chapter three).

corporeal response to the architectural and spatially depicted (i.e. painted or sculpted) object by the subject. But when the conceptual aspects are not there, the terminology produces a certain conflict and enigma for the reader.

The language Wölfflin uses can be seen as an apriori structure that conditions and fosters the aesthetic identity and the experiential reality of the object. Due to psychology's but, more specifically, phenomenology's relevance in the 20th century, and its impact on contemporary art and architectural history and theory, Wölfflin's language, particularly in the English translation, is now no longer strange but, indeed, can be considered as normal. Yet compared with the contemporary and conventional 19th century language of construction, stylistic variations, etc., Wölfflin's psychologised terminology was innovative within the discourse of architectural theory. The language, exemplified in Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty in architectural theory, is so significant that the importance of the wording is not only accepted but considered to be an integral part of the theory. In this regard, the context of the underpinnings of the anthropomorphic language of Wölfflin is largely ignored or forgotten in analyses of his later texts.

The two phenomenological thinkers mentioned employed conceptions of bodiliness which have some similarities to Wölfflin's ideas. Heidegger's *Dasein* is based on a notion of corporeality that is experienced and lived (cf. Dilthey), and based on the centrality of the subject's constitution and localisation in the world and reality. This existential and ontological being-in-the-world⁶⁹, echoes the aesthetic experientialism of Wölfflin's descriptive language. Merleau-

Ponty similarly developed in his text *Phenomenology of Perception* a theory of *Einfühlung*, empathy, with a focus on the relation between the body and language⁷⁰. He wrote that "to experience a structure is not to receive it into oneself passively: it is to live it, to take it up, assume it and discover its immanent significance".⁷¹ Also "my body is the fabric into which all objects are woven, and it is, at least in relation to the perceived world, the general instrument of my 'comprehension'", and, "the word is then indistinguishable from the attitude which it induces".⁷² More specifically on the terminology of conception and description, Merleau-Ponty stated that "every external perception is immediately synonymous with a certain perception of my body, just as every perception of my body is made explicit in the language of external perception".⁷³ Language within phenomenology is an aspect of the expressive character of the embodied mind, the conceptual and constitutive connection of mind and body.

Vincent Scully is another 20th century representative of this subject-driven language. As practitioner of the theory Scully

has turned the theory of empathetic seeing/writing into a high art. The hallmarks of his approach are nuanced observations that take the reader step by step along a path and the author's own subtle, physiological responses to the environment, presumably shared by the reader. Scully need not articulate the theoretical roots and the historicity of the argument -its foundation fractured by decades of theoretical repression- for their self-justifying strength comes from the assumption of its life-enhancing oppositional stance toward dead scholarship.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ Elden (2001), p. 16.

⁷⁰ I select in the following quotations not actual descriptions of aesthetic encounters by Merleau-Ponty, but his theoretical justifications for his particular consideration of bodily perception.

⁷¹ Merleau-Ponty (2005), p. 301.

⁷² Merleau-Ponty (2005), p. 273, 274.

⁷³ Merleau-Ponty (2005), p. 239.

⁷⁴ Jarzombek (1994), p. 45.

Jarzombek correctly characterises the 'de-theorised' after-life of this physiological and psychological language. For while the anthropomorphic terminology is in Wölfflin's text an essential aspect of his theory, in the course of the 20th century the theoretical implications of this language have been neglected. Accordingly, it is one intention of this thesis to reconstruct and illustrate the conceptual background of Wölfflin's descriptive, subject-based terminology.

Another factor within the interpretation of Wölfflin's language is the question of its translation into English.⁷⁵ Because of the century between the publication of the original text (1886) and the English translation (1994), the conceptual contexts of the disciplines of art history and architectural theory are very different. The intellectual framework for Wölfflin in the late 19th century involved the interdependence and, at the same time, the diversification and emergence of individual fields of psychology, physiology, aesthetics and anthropology, from an overall domain of philosophy. The general context was philosophy in which the terminology functioned as implication for particular debates, theories and concepts leading in various different directions. Philosophical dimensions of different discourses with the same terminology, such as *Wahrnehmung*, perception, *Begriff*, *Begrifflichkeit*, conception, *Vorstellung*, *Vorstellungskraft*, imagination, and *Bewußtsein*, consciousness,

⁷⁵ The entire text of the doctoral dissertation of 1886 was translated as part of the book *Empathy, Form, and Space: Problems of German Aesthetics, 1873-1893*, edited by H.F. Mallgrave and E. Ikonomou and published in 1994. The editors mention in their preface that "Stanford Anderson was kind enough to bring to our attention a translation of Wölfflin's dissertation undertaken some years ago by two graduate students at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Florian von Buttlar and Kenneth Kaiser", they do, however, not explicitly say if they have published the translation of the graduate students (or if this translation was already published by the graduate students), or if they have used the earlier translation as base for their

coexisted. The English words used in the translation, at the end of the 20th century do not possess the same connotations as the 1886 German terms, but, rather belong to different discursive formations. Jarzombek rightly concluded that when the *Prolegomena* was translated into English, it involved a negation of the underlying theory and an avoidance of philosophical terminology.⁷⁶ In this sense, the German terminology is untranslatable because each term connotes entire philosophical discussions and traditions, as well as genealogies of epistemological concepts. If the original German intellectual context, that is, the speculations and theoretical explorations behind the mere words of the text, is left out, the translated terms appear 'de-theorised', without their respective theoretical connotations and implications, and, therefore, with a different meaning.⁷⁷ This aspect increases the problems and tensions in the translated text and in the comprehension of Wölfflin's ideas.

THE CONCEPT OF THE BODY

With Kant's subject-centred epistemology, a new organisation and positioning of the subject and the object took place. The connection between subject and object is perception which occurs as physical or empirical experience and as mental conception in the mind (*Vorstellung*) of the subject. Schopenhauer reversed "Kant's privileging of abstract thinking over perceptual knowledge" to a certain degree and insisted on the "physiological makeup of the

own translation. Due to these uncertainties, I take the translation published in 1994 as English translation for my comparison.

⁷⁶ Jarzombek (2000), p. 56.

subject['s body] as the site" where perceptions, consciousness and knowledge are processed -as experience and *Vorstellung*, ideas.⁷⁸ This notion of the body provided Schopenhauer with an immediate and unmediated mechanism for the subject to become aware of its will and self-consciousness. Schopenhauer explored the body as the site for knowledge of the subject, that is, the subject as thing-in-itself. Bodiliness is the condition to recognise or know (*erkennen*) the will and the consciousness of the subject, which manifest, for instance, in movement, expression (of desires, motivation, etc.) and actions.⁷⁹ The body functions as a primary instrument to perceive objects and the exterior world, empirically through the sense organs and mentally in the *Vorstellungen*, in the imagination, as *Anschauungen*, ideas, and images⁸⁰ in the mind.⁸¹ Bodiliness implicates both the subject and the object. In order to have ideas and knowledge about the world, the body is an object among objects; it is just another aspect of the subject's *Vorstellung*, imagination, and *Begriffe*, concepts, about appearances.⁸² As such, objects are considered equal to the body's corporeality, in as much as they are spatial and have effects in space.⁸³ Echoing Schopenhauer in the *Prolegomena*, Wölfflin

⁷⁷ I distinguish here Wölfflin's meaning based on his intellectual contexts from any subsequent interpretations or extensions of Wölfflin's ideas. Both are equally valid; but this thesis is foremost concerned with the text as Wölfflin's discourse.

⁷⁸ Crary (1992), p. 77.

⁷⁹ Schopenhauer (1844), vol. 1, book 2, § 18. "... daher ist der Leib Bedingung der Erkenntnis meines Willens" p. 160 (of 1996 German edition).

⁸⁰ Schopenhauer (1844), vol. 2, book 1, chapter 1, "Bilder in unserem Kopfe" p. 20 (of 1996 German edition).

⁸¹ Schopenhauer (1844), vol. 1, book 2, § 18.

⁸² Schopenhauer (1844), vol.1, book 1, § 6, 9; book 2, § 18: "... Erkennen, welches der bedingende Träger der ganzen Welt als Vorstellung ist, ist dennoch durchaus vermittelt durch einen Leib, dessen Affektionen, wie gezeigt, dem Verstande der Ausgangspunkt der Anschauung jener Welt sind. Dieser Leib ist dem rein erkennenden Subjekt als solchem eine Vorstellung wie jede andere, ein Objekt unter Objekten" p. 157 (of 1996 German edition).

⁸³ Schopenhauer (1844), vol.1, book 2, § 19. "Daß die anderen Objekte, als bloße Vorstellungen betrachtet, seinem Leibe gleich sind, d.h. wie dieser den (nur als Vorstellung selbst möglicherweise vorhandenen) Raum füllen und auch wie dieser im Raum wirken," p. 162 (of 1996 German edition), emphasis by Schopenhauer.

writes: "physical forms possess a character only because we ourselves possess a body".⁸⁴ Wölfflin also wrote in his notebook: "the human body as the main bearer, holder, and vehicle of expression".⁸⁵ In this regard, Schopenhauer stated that the "knowledge which we have due to the nature and the functioning of our own body is used as a key for the identity of appearances in nature and all objects ... which are given as ideas (*Vorstellungen*) in our consciousness, and are judged in analogy to this body".⁸⁶ The world of objects comprises for Schopenhauer an empirical reality to the extent that "although space is only in my head; empirically my head is in space".⁸⁷ The body is part and parcel of the subject, Wölfflin calls this "*Selbsterfahrung*"⁸⁸, self-experience, and "*Selbstwahrnehmung*"⁸⁹, self-perception, which articulates the subject's spatiality. The body is an aspect of the subject which is projected into objects, and specifically onto architecture. The interior and exterior reality of the human body is mapped in analogical bodily terms onto the architectural object. This comprehension of architecture rests on a particular characteristic of human nature which all subjects possess: the consciousness of bodiliness and the existence of a will. For the subject, the will articulates itself in the physical functions and movements of the

⁸⁴ *Prolegomena*, p. 9/151. "Körperliche Formen können charakteristisch sein nur dadurch, daß wir selbst einen Körper besitzen".

⁸⁵ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 50. "den menschlichen Körper als Hauptträger des Ausdrucks".

⁸⁶ Schopenhauer (1844), vol.1, book 2, § 19, "... Erkenntnis, welche wir vom Wesen und Wirken unsers eigenen Leibes haben, weiterhin als Schlüssel zum Wesen jeder Erscheinung in der Natur gebrauchen und alle Objekte, die ... allein als Vorstellung unserm Bewußtsein gegeben sind, eben nach Analogie jenes Leibes beurteilen..." p. 164 (of 1994 German edition).

⁸⁷ Schopenhauer (1844), vol. 2, book 1, chapter 2, "Bei aller transzendentalen Idealität behält die objektive Welt empirische Realität: das Objekt ist zwar nicht Ding an sich; aber es ist als empirisches Objekt real. Zwar ist der Raum nur in meinem Kopf; aber empirische ist meine Kopf im Raum." p. 31 (of 1996 German edition) Schopenhauer's emphasis.

body. In Wölfflin's conception of the body, the distinction between the body as object of perception and as will is suspended. The identity of the subject's body as spatial object and as immediate will (in terms of expression and movement) predicates Wölfflin's notion of an embodied architecture. He attributes a sense of subjective interiority to the architectural object. The bodily experience of architecture is situated on the threshold between the physiological and the psychological. The emphatic identification with and objectification of the will in the material world is correlated by Wölfflin to both the organisation and the functioning of the human body: its vertical⁹⁰ and horizontal⁹¹ structure, as well as its interior psychological, physiological and motor responses.⁹² This echoes Schopenhauer's detailed description of the physical and physiological organism of the empirically constituted body, particularly focusing on the workings of muscles and the nervous system, of blood and the heart.⁹³

The physiological body became a site of analysis. Foucault observed that in the 19th century "the site of analysis is ... man in his finitude ... It was found that knowledge has anatomo-physiological conditions, that it is formed gradually within the structures of the body, that it may have a privileged place within it, but that its forms cannot be dissociated from its peculiar functioning".⁹⁴ The physiology of the body was integrated into theories of perception. Cray commented that

⁸⁸ *Prolegomena*, p. 9/151.

⁸⁹ Notebook 13 (1885/86), p. 90.

⁹⁰ *Prolegomena*, p. 33ff/175ff.

⁹¹ *Prolegomena*, p. 29ff/171ff.

⁹² *Prolegomena*, p. 27/169f.

⁹³ Schopenhauer (1844), vol. 2, book 2, chapter 20; p. 325ff (of 1996 German edition).

visual perception, for example, is inseparable from the muscular movements of the eye and the physical effort involved in focusing on an object or in simply holding one's eyelid open. ... observation is increasingly exteriorised; the viewing body and its objects begin to constitute a single field on which inside and outside are confounded. ... It was the discovery that knowledge was conditioned by the physical and anatomical functioning of the body.⁹⁵

In this respect, Wölfflin attempted to establish an exact relationship between the interior sensory processes of the muscles and the nervous system, and the mind, imagination (*Vorstellung*) and consciousness (*Bewusstsein*), as two domains within the same field of operation of the aesthetic experience. While he accepted this division between the workings of the physical body and the imagination, he was specifically concerned to investigate the connective tissue between the physiological domain of bodily perception and the mental intuition and processes during the aesthetic experience in the *Prolegomena*.

BODY VS. IMAGINATION In the text, Wölfflin is interested in the particular category which processes aesthetic experience within the subject. He asks:

Is this vicarious response a sensory one or does it take place merely in the mind? In other words, do we experience other physical forms with our body? Or is our sympathy toward external conditions only the work of our imagination?⁹⁶

In addition to Kant's notion of aesthetic experience, Wölfflin cites briefly Lotze and Robert Vischer who both consider in their theories 'bodily experience' (*körperliches mit- und nacherleben*) but also identify the dimension of the imagination, and more specifically

⁹⁴ Foucault (1970), p. 319.

⁹⁵ Crary (1992), p. 72, 73, 79.

⁹⁶ *Prolegomena*, p. 12/154.

fantasy, as the locus of this experience.⁹⁷ Wölfflin also discusses Volkelt's theory of symbolisation in the 1886 text, which he finds to be vague about the nature and the location of the experience. Volkelt's descriptions are quoted by Wölfflin: "with my vital feeling I obscurely transfer myself into the object", also characterised as "self-projection".⁹⁸ But Volkelt did change on the exact constitution of this psychological act in his text, according to Wölfflin, who cites several contradictory statements of Volkelt: "we must respond to the object sensuously with our physical organisation", and "it is simply the imagination that carries out the movement", also 'this experience is a self-projection (*Selbstversetzung*)'.⁹⁹ The translation 'self-projection' of the original term '*Selbstversetzung*' has somewhat different connotations from the German term. While 'self-projection' implies a mental activity, '*Selbstversetzung*' indicates a more physical activity. The German terminology implies a change of location or position. This physical aspect is also suggested by other terms Wölfflin used, such as "*Übertragung*" (meaning literally carrying or taking [over there]) translated in the English version as 'transferring' emotions, and "*Nacherleben*" (having the same experience; to re-experience) translated as 'sympathetic response'.¹⁰⁰ In the architectural context, the German terminology involves a physical substitution, an exchange of material positions and locations, and the re-experience over time in terms of interaction and contact. The English terms (self-projection, transferring emotions and sympathetic response), on the other hand, portray an engagement of the imagination and other

⁹⁷ *Prolegomena*, p. 12/154.

⁹⁸ *Prolegomena*, p. 11f/154.

⁹⁹ *Prolegomena*, p. 12/154.

¹⁰⁰ *Prolegomena*, p. 13/155.

mental faculties of the subject. The German terminology allows Wölfflin to frame his hypothesis in terms of a physical reaction in and of the body of the subject when an aesthetic experience is processed. With this he has made a crucial step to 'embody' (*verkörpern*) the Kantian aesthetic experience of the subject. The body now appears within the field of empirical and psychological aesthetics.

BODILY RESPONSE

The idealistic tradition leading from Kant and the German Romantics into the 19th century is clearly visible in the concepts of the imagination (*Vorstellungskraft*) and consciousness (*Bewußtsein*) as centres for aesthetic experience. Wölfflin remarks in the *Prolegomena* that Volkelt went further than this "but", he writes, "without focusing more sharply on the problem", which for Wölfflin concerned the bodiliness of the experience.¹⁰¹ Brief references to other thinkers (Lotze and Robert Vischer) and the discussion of Volkelt's theories lead Wölfflin to the presentation of his own ideas. He says, "instead of an inexplicable 'self-projection', we might perhaps *imagine* that the optic nerve impulse directly stimulates the motor nerves, which cause specific muscles to contract".¹⁰² Wölfflin speculates about the nature of the internal process of an aesthetic experience as taking part not only in the imagination, but also in the nervous system and motor senses of the body: "expression is ... the physical manifestation of the mental

¹⁰¹ *Prolegomena*, p. 12/154.

¹⁰² *Prolegomena*, p. 13/155. My emphasis. The term 'imagine' in this quotation establishes a fundamental criticism of Wölfflin's theory: the neurological knowledge has not yet developed to identify and prove these kind of statements. Nevertheless, Wölfflin's speculations present interesting hypothesis for his time.

process ... [which] extends to the whole organism".¹⁰³ Subsequently he limits the bodily responses to a minimum due to "educational and rational deliberation [which] prevent one from 'giving in' to every impression".¹⁰⁴ Theodor Lipps described this lack of noticeable bodily responses to aesthetic experiences differently, namely not by limiting the degree of the response, but by limiting the visibility of the response. He noted "maybe I am too well brought up, have myself that much under control, considerations of politeness or well-rehearsed habits of action are so powerful in me that ... the bodily response is not shown as a visible effect".¹⁰⁵ Wölfflin insists that the intuition or the "stimulus remains even if the 'impressed expression' ... does not come to the surface (manifests itself in the face or posture)".¹⁰⁶ He thereby defines aesthetic experience as a response of the body of the subject, rather than solely of the imagination. Although these bodily responses are repressed to a degree, they can be observed directly in the breathing rate of the subject, which is, for Wölfflin "the most direct organ of expression".¹⁰⁷ He wrote in a notebook, "the rhythm of breathing is the most immediate expression of a mood".¹⁰⁸ Because breathing is a quasi autonomous function of the body, its expression cannot be repressed. Psychological states of anger or fear are expressed by an increased breathing pattern. Slow or fast breathing are bodily expressions of certain psychological conditions.

¹⁰³ *Prolegomena*, p. 13/155.

¹⁰⁴ *Prolegomena*, p. 13/156.

¹⁰⁵ Lipps (1903), p. 124.

¹⁰⁶ *Prolegomena*, p. 14/156.

¹⁰⁷ *Prolegomena*, p. 14/156.

¹⁰⁸ Notebook 9 (1885), p. 28. "*der Rhythmus des Atmens ist der unmittelbarste Ausdruck der Stimmung*".

Of course, architecture does not breathe. But to the perceiving subject, "the architectural articulation appears as something alive [and] rhythmically breathing", as Wölfflin stated in a notebook.¹⁰⁹ In the experience of an architectural object, bodily responses of the subject are projected into the architecture. This transfer and introjection of a bodily mechanism is perceived as *if* it was an expression of the object; the architectural structure appears to possess a rhythmicality which can be correlated to human breathing patterns. Wölfflin's aesthetic experience is a bodily *Erlebnis*, a lived experience, in which breathing is a vital part.

Yet this issue of breathing is problematic. It involves the possibility and, at the same time, the impossibility of interpreting breathing as an aesthetic expression due to its independent and automatic occurrence within the living body. Breathing is a continuous and essential function of the body's existence. It is difficult to transform it into an index of aesthetic experience. Breathing is a bodily condition which never stops and which can be affected by all sorts of experiences. To include breathing within the architectural aesthetic experience, in the way Wölfflin does, appears forced. It demonstrates Wölfflin's rather desperate need of an organ of inherent bodily expression with which to register the impressions of objects in the subject. The ontological and epistemological constitution of bodiliness in the text is focused particularly on the operation of perception in terms of *Einfühlung*.

¹⁰⁹ Notebook 8 (1884), p. 146. "...die architektonische Gliederung als etwas lebendiges, rhythmisch-atmendes erscheint". My emphasis.

text is that Wölfflin employs the idea of *Einfühlung*¹¹⁰, empathy, as a constitutive element with which he builds his theory of architecture. "Empathy" in the late 19th century, Schwarzer observed, "was the perceptual exteriorisation of the individual and the interiorisation of the object, a direct merger of the optic perceptive processes with the shapes of physical objects".¹¹¹ *Einfühlung* is an approach in which the subject is made a locus of properties of the object, and the body is the field of the projective contact between subject and object. Wölfflin is not concerned with a purely theoretical investigation of *Einfühlung*.¹¹² He uses the notions of empathy with reference to the main thinkers of the field, e.g. Wundt, Friedrich and Robert Vischer, Lotze and Volkelt, in his text.¹¹³ Wölfflin wants to concentrate on the location of the experience in the body of the subject with his recognition that the *Einfühlung* thinkers he mentions, did not link their theories to the issue of bodily constitution.¹¹⁴ He acknowledged their silence or confusion over this matter and wanted to produce an original speculation, in his doctoral dissertation. It gave him the freedom not only to explore the notion

¹¹⁰ Generally, *Einfühlung* "is the idea that the vital properties which we experience in or attribute to any person or object outside ourselves are the projections of our own feelings and thoughts". Gauss (1998), p. 85. In this sense, "the psychogenesis of empathy begins in the process of transference, as defined by Freud" Stewart (1956), p. 40.

¹¹¹ Schwarzer (1995a), p. 234. Note that other theories of empathy have been developed in the course of the 20th century as extension and addition, but also in reaction and differentiation to the ideas and 'versions' prevalent in the late 19th century.

¹¹² As, for instance, Robert Vischer was considering in his text "*Über das optische Formgefühl*" (1872), where he stated "the reason for this remarkable union, fusion (*Verschmelzung*) of subject and object is the conception of emotion (*Gefühlsvorstellung*) ... The pantheist desire toward a union with the world is the basis of this symbolising activity" (p. 27).

¹¹³ *Prolegomena*, p. 8/151, 11f/153f, 16/158, 20ff/162ff.

¹¹⁴ Apart from Robert Vischer who speculated more concretely about the bodily activity of vision in regard to aesthetic understanding. These ideas will become relevant for Wölfflin in his 1915 text, *Principles of Art History*, which are discussed in chapter three of this thesis.

of bodily experience but also to integrate the concept into his architectural theory.¹¹⁵

With the concept of *Einfühlung* Wölfflin managed a strategic appropriation of subjectivity in terms of the inherent consciousness of the body (Schopenhauer). The reference of the body ranged from the corporeal to the psychological. The structure and corporeality of the body prompted, for Wölfflin, the psychological dimension, the possibility for *Einfühlung*, and with this an insight and understanding of bodiliness which permeates all art. He stated in a notebook: "arch[itecture] the foundation and root of all other art".¹¹⁶ This means that the spatial, material and physical aspects of architecture with their relation and intrinsic affinity to the corporeality of the subject, substantiate the epistemological bodiliness of art objects for the subject. Hildebrand later, in his text *Das Problem der Form in der bildenden Kunst* (1893), explained a similar aspect as "kinesthetic activity" which describes the activity of the eye movements of an observer when 'scanning' an object in order for the subject to get an idea of its form, to get an idea of the object's "spatial form".¹¹⁷ Wölfflin also wrote in his notebooks: "art – shows us its body"¹¹⁸, and "art and literature: body and language"¹¹⁹. The corporeality of architecture and of figurative depictions in paintings and sculpture is a framework of knowledge with which the subject's bodiliness registers spatial effects, characteristics and identities of the objects. The body and bodiliness are, furthermore, implied in Wölfflin's

¹¹⁵ While the Empathy theorists did contemplate the experiential dimension of aesthetic objects, they did not specifically venture into the terrain of architecture. While for Wölfflin, the field of architecture in its material and physical form must have appeared to be predisposed for the bodily experience of *Einfühlung*.

¹¹⁶ Notebook 12 (1886), p. 95. "Arch[itektur] Grund und Wurzel aller anderen Kunst".

¹¹⁷ Hildebrand (1893), p. 229; 231.

¹¹⁸ Notebook 8 (1884/85), p. 134. "Die Kunst – zeigt uns seinen [ihren] Leib".

comments on form, with specific link to the notions of the organic (*das Organische*) and the humanly, the anthropomorphic (*das Menschliche*).¹²⁰ The notion of "*Formgefühl*" (feeling for form) describes the body as fundamentally "*formdurchdrungen*", meaning being pervaded and encapsulated by form.¹²¹ The form of the human body is a fundamental physiological pattern with which bodily objects can be interpreted according to Wölfflin. This perceptual anthropomorphisation of the object "presumed [the] existence of pure conditions of order in ... the sensual mind [and the] material world".¹²² In terms of the philosophical and art historical concerns of the text, the body and bodily experience are considered universal factors according to which all architecture, art and culture can be analysed and interpreted. The organisation and functioning of the human body and the transcendent aspects of these bodily attributes provided Wölfflin with the mechanism to explore architectural objects above and beyond the historical process. The body gained a constitutive role in the apprehension of the bodily and visible world.

Wölfflin relegated from the theory of *Einfühlung* -as it was developing- the various ideas connected to aesthetics and epistemology, psychology and physiology. The integration of *Einfühlung* in Wölfflin's architectural theory makes his text an important strand of his art-historical thinking in terms of an 'aesthetics of reception'. The identity of the experience of psychological and bodily reality, involved the *wissenschaftliche* notions of experiment

¹¹⁹ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 117. "*Kunst und Lit[eratur]: Leib und Sprache*".

¹²⁰ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 39. "*Form – im Organischen. Form – im Menschlichen*".

¹²¹ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 39.

¹²² Schwarzer (1995a), p. 217.

and exactness, as well as the philosophical and epistemological fields. The interrelation between the conceptual and material arenas fundamentally characterised Wölfflin's conception of art history and his architectural theory. One illustration of this affiliation is the articulation of bodiliness to clothing.

BODY & CLOTHING

In the last chapter of the 1886 text, Wölfflin presents his 'Principles of Historical Judgement', focusing again on his concept of the body. While the previous discussions of the body in the text centred on the philosophical in relation to Schopenhauer and empathy theory, here, another dimension of the question of the body becomes apparent. Wölfflin writes: "any architectural style reflects the *attitude and movement of the people* in the period concerned ... architecture corresponds to the costume of the period".¹²³ Wölfflin associates body attitude, posture and movement, "clothing, jewellery and tools"¹²⁴ with architecture. He interprets costumes and body postures (as observed in sculpture and paintings) as indications of the bodily expression of psychological feelings and attitudes to the body. Similarly, Belting affirmed that clothing is an extension of the body-image, a gesture of *Verkörperung*, of the embodiment of the subject.¹²⁵ In his notebook, when preparing his dissertation, Wölfflin related the means (*Mittel*) of human expression to those of architectural expression; he commented on the "parallel of costume

¹²³ *Prolegomena*, p. 39/182. "Ein architektonischer Stil gibt die Haltung und Bewegung der Menschen seiner Zeit wieder ... die Architektur mit dem Zeitkostüm übereinstimmt". Wölfflin's emphasis.

¹²⁴ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 147. "Kleidung und Schmuck und Geräte".

¹²⁵ Belting (2002), p. 88.

and jewellery"¹²⁶, and even "the lines of typefaces"¹²⁷ to architecture.

Clothing and postures of the body are described in terms of the disposition of a subject towards existence and reality as expressive portrayals of the mood and of the spirit of the times. The way a person is dressed and how he/she moves and carries him/herself permit speculation about the outlook and disposition of this person. How people experience their body shows how they feel. Wölfflin exemplifies here typical 19th century theories about the expressive aspect of behaviour and physiognomy, while generalising this psychological observation from the individual to the community and a people (*Volk*). He presents an affinity and correspondence of the psychological condition of the body (in clothing and gestures) depicted in a painting or in sculpture, with the identity and character of the architecture of the time. Wölfflin gives an example of this in the *Prolegomena*. He argues that the pointed shoe of the Gothic period, and the narrow noses, the foreheads with hard vertical folds, and the stiff and pulled together bodies of late medieval sculpture are similar in sentiment and psychological demeanour to the pointed arches of the architecture of the epoch.¹²⁸ A subject looking at the clothing and the body postures depicted in sculpture and paintings of the Gothic period finds information and potential introspection into the psychological states of the presented bodily expressions in these arts; for Wölfflin, these psychological circumstances also underlie the architecture of the

¹²⁶ Notebook 11 (1885/86), p. 74.

¹²⁷ Notebook 10 (1885), p. 60.

¹²⁸ *Prolegomena*, p. 40/183.

age.¹²⁹ In a sense, the body, in relation to architecture, clothing and figural postures, manifests the expression and the embodiment of mental and psychological conditions; this embodiment is regarded as an universal aspect that characterises human consciousness and being.¹³⁰

The expression of interior states on the outside (in gestures, behaviour and clothing) describes the relation of the bodiliness of subject and object. For Wölfflin, all forms are conditioned by a principle of form which illustrates the expression of the underlying psychological and cultural mood and disposition of a place and time. Wölfflin bases this theory on the idea that: "psychological feeling is directly transformed into bodily form"¹³¹, be it in clothing, architecture or in the depictions of human figures in painting and sculpture. The body, in connection to architecture and clothing, is the visible expression of the attitude and the state of mind of the human subject.¹³² The body, clothing and architecture express the common psychological state of a culture.

With regard to the issues of clothing and style, Schwartz has recently made an interesting argument concerning Wölfflin. Wölfflin's notion of style is based on historical form expressing visually the psychological and bodily attitudes and the will of a culture. This

¹²⁹ Interestingly enough, with this example of the Gothic, Wölfflin refers to Hermann Weiss' text *Kostümkunde*, a publication in several volumes outlining the history of costumes, weapons, tools and architecture (or building traditions). While Weiss did not outline a theory which explains specifically the connections of costumes and buildings presented together in his text, he saw these areas as belonging to a general history of what we would now call material culture, Wölfflin, on the other hand, focuses on this association of clothing and architecture with regard to the concept of the body.

¹³⁰ Belting (2001), p. 88; 110.

¹³¹ *Prolegomena*, p. 40/182. "wo ein Psychisches sich unmittelbar in körperliche Form umsetzt".

¹³² Wölfflin does not comment on this directly, but it seems obvious that he implies that this is an unconscious process. It is merely a characteristic of the human condition and culture. Also, this visual expression of the body has to be seen in

art historical understanding of style involves both "visual uniformity" and "spiritual unity", which for Schwartz, "represents to a certain extent a longing for an idealised past".¹³³ Schwartz in his generally socio-economical argument observed that

fashion was no longer discussed simply as a matter of clothing style, but became to be a blanket term used to describe the appearance of saleable objects of many kinds; ... Fashion was understood as a state of semiotic chaos which developed in the 19th century as a direct result of industrial production and speculative commerce. It was form out of control.¹³⁴

Fashion in the 19th century became the opposite of style: fashion implied endless transformation, rapid change, discontinuity, difference and the concept of 'the new'; whereas style referred to unity, continuity and a uniform totality, tradition, the past and cultural identity. Wölfflin related clothing to architecture and the general culture of a time in the *Prolegomena* in terms of style and not fashion. However, he did describe 19th century eclectic and historicist revivals of architectural styles, in his later text, *Classic Art* (1899), as a time "when styles change like fancy dress. This uprooting of style dates to our century and we have really no longer any right to talk of styles, but only of fashions".¹³⁵ In antagonism and criticism of his own cultural framework, Wölfflin distinguished the architectural styles of the past from the architectural fashions of the present. Schwartz commented that 'style' was used in the German intellectual discourse to describe a category of the past, such as a historical style of architecture, in opposition to fashion, but 'style' also served to present and analyse the modern problem of cultural crisis,

distinction to the expression of feelings and thoughts in writing, as, for instance, in poetry.

¹³³ Schwartz (2005), p. 9.

¹³⁴ Schwartz (2005), p. 9; 17.

¹³⁵ Wölfflin, *Die klassische Kunst*, p. 253 (of 10th edition, 1983), p. 231 (of 1953 English edition).

in terms of fashion¹³⁶. In this regard, it appears that "Wölfflin was caught between style and fashion".¹³⁷ I would argue, on the other hand, that Wölfflin knew precisely the difference between the two concepts and employed them accordingly. In the *Prolegomena*, he talks about clothing and not fashion, that is, clothing with regard to the cultural traditions before the changes of the 19th century, before the fast-paced fashion emerged.¹³⁸ In *Classic Art*, Wölfflin is distinguishing the apparently culturally divorced, ruptured and seemingly historically disconnected fashions of 19th century architectural revivals from the more continuous, uniform and lasting architectural and artistic style of the Renaissance. Because he wanted to construct the style of the Renaissance as a unified cultural totality (in homage to Burckhardt), Wölfflin presented his experience of 19th century architecture as a foil -unstable, disrupted, disintegrated and fragmented, as mere fashion, in his 1899 text. He contrasted fleeting 19th century fashions with stable styles of the past. Even if the pointed shoe might have been only an item of fashion for people in the late 12th century, it exemplifies and expresses the broader cultural style of the Middle Ages for a subject removed in time and culture, for instance, a historian in the late 19th century.

Wölfflin's connection of architecture and clothing also refers to the typical characteristic of 19th century architectural historicism which combined modern construction materials and techniques with

¹³⁶ Schwartz (2005), p. 1.

¹³⁷ Schwartz (2005), p. 24.

¹³⁸ Unfortunately, Schwartz uncovered a research error by Wölfflin who names the pointed shoe as a characteristic of medieval clothing, culture and psychological attitudes, starting in the late 12th century, with reference to Weiss's *Kostümkunde* (*Prolegomena*, p. 40/183). In reading Weiss, Schwartz found that Weiss characterised the pointed shoe as "strange fashion" which disappeared quickly, and not as a thorough element of medieval culture. I consider this as an error in the selection of his examples by Wölfflin, but not as unhinging his argument about the

facades designed to mirror historical styles. Hermann Bahr "advocated that architecture take off its costumes", Schwarzer observed¹³⁹, in order to find a more authentic exterior expression of the interior architectural structure. Similarly, clothing expressed the social status and the character and attitudes of a person. 19th century architectural discourse worked with revivals of historic styles, to find a style which expressed their culture.¹⁴⁰ The mixing and matching of architectural styles from the past can be considered as the expression of the eclectic, dynamic and heterogeneous culture of the 19th century, even if this activity was contested and seen in negative terms during the 19th century.¹⁴¹ History was the dominating register in all aspects of culture at this time, in order to analyse the knowledge of the past. Wölfflin's theory of architecture relates to this but was based on different foundations: influenced by Kant's aesthetic experience and the constitution of the object by the subject, Schopenhauer's expression of will and Dilthey's *Erlebnis* of the past, architecture can be understood from within the subject, through perception. For Wölfflin, the expression and the consciousness of perception, cognition, feeling and will of subject and object unite architecture and clothing in their bodiliness.

Clothing and architecture both envelope the human body, but to different degrees. Clothing surrounds the body with the immediacy of touch; clothes are in direct contact with the body, or

similarity of clothing and architecture expressing cultural bodily ideals and depicting psychological bodiliness.

¹³⁹ Schwarzer (1995a), p. 222. Schwarzer refers to Bahr's text: *Renaissance: Neue Studien zur Kritik der Moderne* from 1897.

¹⁴⁰ This discourse had two main dimensions: the dissection, analysis and categorisation of historic styles, on the one hand, and the exploration of more general mechanisms of building, on the other hand, as, for instance, exemplified by Semper's theories of the identities and origins of architectural principles.

¹⁴¹ In a similar vein, the revival of past clothing styles in the last ten years implies a cultural re-assimilation and re-working, almost a nostalgic return to the past.

the skin of the body. The body is *inside* clothing. Clothing functions as another layer around the body, as a second skin. In this sense, clothing becomes a part of the body. Clothes are expressions of behaviour, the movements and the actions of a subject. Clothing can be an expression of psychological states and attitudes. Architectural or interior decoration generally reflects the identity and character of the inhabitant. Particularly the home (house, flat, room) and surroundings which can be shaped, decorated or arranged as one likes, can generally be considered as an outlet of the subject's psychological situation and condition. Architecture, like clothing, surrounds the body, but it consists of a spatial enclosure which does not have immediate contact with the body (apart from the floor) and which can vary greatly in size and scale in relation to the body of the subject. As enclosure, architecture protects the subject from the natural environment, as does clothing. Wölfflin does not say this, but his ideas imply such an interpretation. For while architecture and clothing establish not only a distinction between the interior and exterior, similar to the skin of the body, buildings and clothing also occupy the threshold or the membrane between these areas, they have the role of connecting, transmitting, and co-ordinating the exchange between the two dimensions. The body is, like architecture and clothing, an interface, between an outside and an inside.

THE PSYCHOLOGISED BODY

Wölfflin believes that experiences of psychological circumstances and events with the body allow for an insight and an understanding of mental states and bodily attitudes in artistic and cultural objects. People through

history have different experiences, but they can be interpreted in terms of the same categories, such as time, space and the body. Bodily consciousness, expressions and experiences always already have an impact on perception. Seeing and perceiving with moving eyes is an inherent act of animation, as Belting noted.¹⁴² Wölfflin argues that it is crucial to describe how the "form-imagination is bound to human nature" when the history of form, in all the various artistic and cultural products, is analysed.¹⁴³ He wrote in a notebook, "expression [is] like an inner sense, self-perception, inner experience[s] are consequences of anthropomorphic habits ... (How to say it? Subj[ect] and obj[ect are] identical)".¹⁴⁴ The subject perceives and expresses mental and physiological processes with the body, which are then used to interpret and understand other objects in similar terms as bodily and embodied forms. The experience of bodiliness by the subject functions as a means of knowledge: shaping and framing the recognition and comprehension of the object and its form with the anthropomorphic properties of bodiliness. Wölfflin said it directly in the notebook: 'subject and object are identical'. This is the epistemological foundation for his concept of the body, and in turn for his theory of architecture. He states in his conclusion to the 1886 text that: "the organisation of the human body is shown to be the constant denominator within all change".¹⁴⁵ This means that while material manifestations, the mental images and ideals of the body change all

¹⁴² Belting (2002), p. 13.

¹⁴³ *Prolegomena*, p. 41/184.

¹⁴⁴ Notebook 13 (1885/86), p. 90. "Ausdruck wie innerer Sinn, Selbstwahrnehmung, innere Erfahrung[en] sind Folgen anthropomorpher Gewohnheiten ... (Wie soll man sagen? Subj.[ekt] und Obj.[ekt sind] identisch)".

¹⁴⁵ *Prolegomena*, p. 42/184. "...die Organisation des menschlichen Körpers als der bleibende Nenner bei allem Wechsel".

the time, and are different in the various (national or local) cultures, it is the physical and ontological structure and the psychological processes of the human body -its vertical and horizontal composition and arrangement, its mechanisms of perception and expression- which provide the conceptual and epistemological continuity through history. This continuity predicates all possible understanding of art and architecture of the past. The body is an instrument for the historian of culture to decipher, comprehend, and interpret appearances and depictions and the psychological state and attitude to life throughout history. In short, the similarity of the human body and its experience to artistically depicted bodies, as well as to architectural bodies, prompts the body's function as an interface, as an hermeneutic tool, and, therefore, as a principle of historical interpretation of the past. Similarly, Belting commented not long ago on the "double body reference (*doppelter Körperbezug*)": we judge by analogy of our body to the corporeality of an object, and we experience our body as an event in the act of perception of another body, as self-perception (*Eigenwahrnehmung*).¹⁴⁶ Belting almost quotes Wölfflin when he writes: "we see images [and objects] with our bodily organs, even if it is not fashionable at the present moment which focuses [mostly] on the information-registration of the brain, to discuss the body as totality".¹⁴⁷

Belting has recently argued for the intimate connection of, yet at the same time the distinction between, the image of a body (*Körperbild*) and the image of a human being (*Menschenbild*).¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Belting (2002), p. 13.

¹⁴⁷ Belting (2002), p. 58. "Wir sehen Bilder mit unseren körperlichen Organen, auch wenn es derzeit nicht Mode ist, neben der Informationsverarbeitung durch das Gehirn noch vom Körper als Ganzheit zu sprechen".

¹⁴⁸ Belting (2002), p. 87.

The image of a human body expresses a certain idea of the human being. The embodied self has beliefs about the body as object. Belting observed that images present human bodies based on the fact that it was always -more or less- the same body but this body was depicted in different ways. He echoes some of Wölfflin's theories as presented in the doctoral dissertation of 1886. Belting cites the psychologist Robert D. Romanyshyn who sees the body as a cultural invention.¹⁴⁹ For Belting, the role of the body in art and architecture is the site of a collective tradition; culture and tradition are attached to bodies and their history.¹⁵⁰ Belting, a scholar working in the field of contemporary visual media studies, is an example and evidence of how ideas, as explored by Wölfflin, can have significance for today's theoretical discourse.

The psychologised body is a mechanism through which a culture is expressed in form. For Wölfflin, the material history of forms needed to be correlated to the imagination or fantasy of form (*Formphantasie*). Generally, culture expresses the mood of an era, the spirit of the age. It is important to differentiate Wölfflin's understanding of the concept of the *Zeitgeist* from its prominent use by Hegel. While for Hegel *Geist* was an absolute concept, and thus the realisation of freedom (with social, political and theological dimensions), Wölfflin had a less philosophical understanding of it. For Wölfflin, it was the life of a people, its culture. He used the terms *Zeitgeist* and *Volksgeist* in his notebooks.¹⁵¹ They demarcate the cultural expression of a certain time or of a certain nation. By the

¹⁴⁹ Belting (2002), p. 89.

¹⁵⁰ Belting (2002), p. 58; 60.

time of Wölfflin, art is generally regarded as an expression of the *Zeitgeist*.¹⁵² Dilthey described the concept in terms of the coherence (*Zusammenhang*) of culture.¹⁵³ The notion of a cultural *Zeitgeist* permeates the arenas of the major and the minor arts, uniting architecture and clothing in the concept of the body, as argued by Wölfflin in the *Prolegomena*. Nowadays, the concept of *Zeitgeist* still has Hegelian undertones, and in general, scepticism outlaws the term in contemporary historiography. Nevertheless, the concept is a means to describe a cultural generality or trend within a society, even if the concept is contested and appears to be derived from Hegel's philosophy¹⁵⁴.

THE ARCHITECTURAL BODY

In architectural theory, the body "had previously been a foundation of classical design theory, a principle of making as well as a standard of judging, [it] was now [in the late 19th century] placed in the service of perception".¹⁵⁵ Wölfflin wrote in a notebook: "comprehend body through body".¹⁵⁶ This means he suggests an understanding of architecture in terms of the physical corporeality of the object, as another body. In the text, Wölfflin makes two crucial statements: "our own bodily organisation is the form through which we apprehend everything physical"¹⁵⁷ and "physical forms possess a character only because we ourselves

¹⁵¹ Notebook 8 (1884/85), p. 155, p. 150.

¹⁵² Notebook 8 (1884), p. 72: "Art – the most visual expression of a time period (*Kunst – der anschaulichste Ausdruck einer Zeit*)".

¹⁵³ Barasch (1988), p. 70.

¹⁵⁴ Particularly with regard to interpretations which (over)emphasised teleological issues by subsequent scholars.

¹⁵⁵ Vidler (1992), p. 73.

¹⁵⁶ Notebook 11 (1885/86), inside of front cover. „Körper durch Körper verstanden".

¹⁵⁷ *Prolegomena*, p. 15/157f. "Unsere leibliche Organisation ist die Form, unter der wir alles Körperliche auffassen".

possess a body"¹⁵⁸. Because the human body is conceived as experiencing internal responses and expressing psychological states, the architectural body, not only metaphorically but also perceptually, does so as well. These architectural expressions are then perceived by the subject and judged according to the body.

Wölfflin's approach to architecture is what I propose to call anthropomorphism. It should be distinguished from anthropocentrism within architectural theory. Anthropocentrism advocated by Vitruvius and Alberti, locates the image of the human body as an exemplum of eternal essence and divine measure. Vitruvius wrote: "Thus in the *human body* there is a kind of symmetrical harmony between forearm, foot, palm, finger, and other small parts; and so it is with *perfect buildings*".¹⁵⁹ Similarly, in Book 3, chapter 1, which is entitled: 'On Symmetry: in Temples and in the Human Body', he stated that:

since nature has designed the *human body* so that its members are in proportion to the frame as a whole, it appears that the ancients had good reason for their rule, that in *perfect buildings* the different members must be in exact symmetrical relations to the whole scheme ... Further, it was from the members of the *body* that they derived the fundamental ideas of the measures which are obviously necessary in all works.¹⁶⁰

Alberti repeated Vitruvius to a degree. The structure of the human body, that is, the composition of parts, was related to architecture, functioning as a model for perfect architectural proportions: "...from the nature of mankind, and ... since upon their account it is that buildings are erected,..."¹⁶¹. In Book 6, chapter 5, Alberti described the design and structure of a perfect building, but occasionally, in

¹⁵⁸ *Prolegomena*, p. 9/151. "Körperliche Formen können charakteristisch sein nur dadurch, daß wir selbst einen Körper besitzen".

¹⁵⁹ Vitruvius, Book 1, chapter 2. P. 14 (of 1960 edition). My emphasis.

¹⁶⁰ Vitruvius, Book 3, chapter 1. P. 73 (of 1960 edition). My emphasis.

¹⁶¹ Alberti: *The Ten Books of Architecture*, 1755 Leoni edition. Book 4, chapter 1. p. 64 (of 1986 edition).

this passage, one could imagine him talking about the artistic depiction of the perfect human body in a painting or in sculpture.

He wrote:

It will therefore be a just and proper compartition, if it is neither confused, nor interrupted, neither too rambling nor composed of unsuitable parts, and if the members be neither too many nor too few, neither too small nor too large, not mismatched nor unsightly, nor as it were separate and divided from the rest of the body: But everything so disposed according to Nature and convenience, and the uses to which the structure is intended, with such order, number, size, situation and form,...¹⁶²

In such theory, the building represented an ideal and divine perfection, based on the study of proportion and measurement. Vidler noted that "the building derived its authority, proportional and compositional, from this [idealised human body mirroring the divine] body, and, in a complementary way, the building then acted to confirm and establish the body -social and individual- in the world".¹⁶³ The significant aspect of anthropocentrism is its mathematical dimension. The image of the Vitruvian Man, as depicted famously by Leonardo di Vinci, is an ideal construction and presentation of the unity of nature and creation, of man within the mathematical (scientific and divine) world. The ideal body of anthropocentrism is a construct(ion) which is conceived as autonomous image to which no real or actual human body can correspond.¹⁶⁴ The correlation of divine and human nature was visualised, for example, in the anthropomorphising of columns, as realised in caryatids, for example in the Erechtheion, and also

¹⁶² Alberti, Book 6, chapter 5. P. 118. (My emphasis).

¹⁶³ Vidler (1992), p. 71.

¹⁶⁴ Even if the head of Leonardo's figure apparently shows a resemblance to the aged artist himself; the body, on the other hand, is the depiction of a much younger man.

theorised in treatises¹⁶⁵ or in the superimposed drawing of a human figure onto architectural plans of cathedrals, as, for instance done by Francesco di Giorgio in the Renaissance. Panofsky presented a typically iconological explanation of the analogy of perfect and divine human and architectural proportions relating it both to a "harmonistic cosmology and [to] normative aesthetics".¹⁶⁶ In the discrepancy between the ideal and the living body in this tradition, we observe conflicts between the body and geometry, and between anatomy and aesthetics.¹⁶⁷ The traditional anthropocentric account of the body vanished when the Pythagorean notion of ratio and proportion disintegrated during the 18th and 19th centuries.

Anthropomorphism is characterised by a system of phenomena. The building has a relation to the body, as Wölfflin argues, in terms of the perception by the subject. While anthropocentrism utilised the body as a mathematical tool of measure for the design and as a judgement of a building, in Wölfflin's version of anthropomorphism the body becomes a tool of perception. Wölfflin locates the perception of the ideals of the body which change over time, in the depictions of form, figural postures and movement, as well as in the architectural body. He writes: "It is astounding to travel through history and observe how architecture everywhere imitates the ideal of man in the form and movement of the body".¹⁶⁸ For Wölfflin, the anthropomorphic model of man is not

¹⁶⁵ Cf. the Doric order was compared to a man, the Ionic order to a woman, and the Corinthian order to an adolescent girl by Vitruvius. Book 4, chapter 1. P. 103f.

¹⁶⁶ Panofsky (1983), p. 120.

¹⁶⁷ Belting (2002), p. 102.

¹⁶⁸ *Prolegomena*, p. 41/183. "Man durchwandert mit Erstaunen die Geschichte und beobachtet, wie die Architektur überall das Ideal des Menschen in Körpergestalt und Körperbewegung nachgebildet [hat]".

an absolute scheme, as in classical anthropocentrism, but rather predicates the various changing ideals across time, which are all based on the same primary condition: the physical (anatomical) organisation of the human body (e.g. the upright stance), with its exterior and interior systems and the continuous factor of the bodily experience and perception. Recht described Wölfflin's anthropomorphism as an 'anthropology of architecture'¹⁶⁹, the architectural object is a psychologised body, in relation to the human body, and for the bodily responses of the subject. The architectural body conveys cultural, psychological and anthropomorphical expressions of those who created (designed, planned, funded and inhabited) the building. In the text, Wölfflin attempts to define the psychophysical organisation of perception, that is, the bodiliness of the human subject as a new apriori.¹⁷⁰ The history of architecture is correlated to the cultural history of the body, and thereby also related to the history of perception. The idea of bodiliness put forward by Wölfflin is shared by subject and object, and it involves notions of interiority and exteriority in connection to perception and understanding. Merleau-Ponty asserted that a "theory of the body is already a theory of perception".¹⁷¹ Wölfflin's text can be regarded in this light as proto-phenomenological. Merleau-Ponty's theory echoes, to a degree, Wölfflin's concepts, arguing for a "pre-logical unity of the bodily schema", for the body as an "instrument of comprehension", and for the body and the subject as "being oriented" and "situated".¹⁷²

¹⁶⁹ Recht (1995), pp. 31-59. p. 36.

¹⁷⁰ Bauer, Hermann (1976), p. 24.

¹⁷¹ Merleau-Ponty (2005), p. 235.

¹⁷² Merleau-Ponty (2005), p. 270; 273; 293; 294.

The subject's body is experienced and transmitted through self-images, through subjective body-images. The body-image of the subject is an internal conception of its external shape and corporeality; it functions predominantly in the subconscious of the subject's psyche. Wölfflin's view is that the psychological effect of architecture on the body of the viewing subject enables the subject to understand the body images of a community through the architectural object. Since the human body image is not stable, it is important to realise that bodies appear(ed) in images, objects, and in architecture, because they express and depict the *present* ideas of the subject, according to Belting¹⁷³, who reformulates notions which Wölfflin has portrayed in the *Prolegomena*. Psychological and psychoanalytical studies of the 20th century have opened up the complexities of these mental constructs and their malfunction sometimes (cf. body-image disorders). Given the knowledge and the speculations of today's theories, Wölfflin's notions may appear naive. He simply characterised the response of the body as psychological. But this is beside the point. To criticise Wölfflin from the position of our knowledge which was not at his disposal which was done by several critics of the 20th century is anachronistic.¹⁷⁴

The indeterminate arena of psychology at the time allowed Wölfflin to identify the field of the psychology of the subject in relation to the architectural object. The connection of body and psyche which Wölfflin sees as a corporeal instrument or tool of

¹⁷³ Belting (2002), p. 94.

¹⁷⁴ I am thinking here mostly of Arnheim and Gombrich who in advancing their own generational conflict and agenda criticised Wölfflin unfairly by employing subsequently developed ideas, i.e. after Wölfflin. With regard to the intention of this thesis, to construct the discourses of Wölfflin's texts, the criticism of later theorists will be discarded, because it involves the reception and after-effect (*Nachwirkung*) of

understanding and knowledge (*Erkenntnis*) was substantiated within the philosophical field of psychology.

PSYCHOLOGY

The field of psychology had its origins in the discipline of philosophy in the 19th century. Most of the German 'psychologists' in the 19th century held chairs in philosophy.¹⁷⁵ A look at the variety of topics of the texts by some psychologists might suggest an intellectual condition which we today would call interdisciplinarity. Of course, these fields (of psychology, physiology, anthropology, aesthetics, etc.) were then not yet considered to be differentiated and independent disciplines, but only dimensions or themes within the domain of philosophy. They only evolved into more autonomous academic disciplines in the course of the 20th century.¹⁷⁶

Hermann Lotze is a prime example of the breadth of the academic subject of philosophy: he studied philosophy and medicine, wrote doctoral dissertations in both disciplines, and was habilitated in the faculties of philosophy and medicine.¹⁷⁷ Lotze worked as a physician and published books on metaphysics (1841), pathology (1842), and logic (1843). Later, he wrote on general physiology (1851), medical psychology (1852), his major philosophical work called *Mikrokosmos* (1856-1864), his history of

Wölfflin's theories, a topic which I found is too big, too complex and problematic, unfortunately, to include in this interpretation.

¹⁷⁵ Boring (1957), p. 262.

¹⁷⁶ Note that I am not attempting to outline or describe the field of psychology as such. Rather, I would like to present the aspect of (in today's terms) inter- or multi-disciplinarity involved in what was then generally labelled psychology within the domain of philosophy. I am using this anachronistic terminology to characterise the multiple dimensions making up the field of psychology. Although it is apparent that psychology then was not the coming together of different disciplines; but that the various fields were conceptually connected and all of them emerged out of the territory of philosophy.

¹⁷⁷ Boring (1957), p. 263.

German aesthetics (1868), and a second system of philosophy including a text about logic (1874) and another on metaphysics (1879).¹⁷⁸ Lotze taught aesthetics in the faculty of philosophy at the Universities of Leipzig, Göttingen, and Berlin (where Wölfflin took courses with him). With a background in medical science, he looked for physiological or physical explanations of the psychological associations of ideas.¹⁷⁹ His psychological theories tended to move from philosophical themes into the more concrete anatomical and medical realms of knowledge.

Gustav Theodor Fechner was another 'psychologist' who worked in the philosophical sub-discipline of aesthetics but touched on many aspects of other philosophical fields. He was appointed professor of physics.¹⁸⁰ He developed 'psychophysics', the measurement of stimulus and response-intensities, which evolved into 'experimental aesthetics'.¹⁸¹ The notion of measurement was a means to render the perceiving subject manageable, predictable, productive and rational.¹⁸² His empirical approach can be seen as a reaction against the preceding tradition of aesthetics since Kant which were understood by Fechner as 'aesthetics from above'.¹⁸³ By this he meant arguing from universal concerns towards the concrete aesthetic experience in the mind and the imagination. This was to be countered by a new aesthetic mode, 'aesthetics from below', following particular evidence towards more general concepts. This involved laboratory experimentation in which statistical analysis was employed as in the empirical sciences.

¹⁷⁸ Wentscher (1913).

¹⁷⁹ Mallgrave and Ikonomou (1994), p. 20.

¹⁸⁰ Boring (1957), p. 277.

¹⁸¹ Schneider (1997), p. 128.

¹⁸² Crary (1992), p. 147.

Fechner's principle of aesthetic association of thought when aesthetic objects are viewed and experienced was predominantly based on memory and general life-experiences.¹⁸⁴ His 'psychophysics' which began as a philosophical enterprise soon moved to the paradigm of the experimental method of the natural sciences. The relations between the psychical and the physical in the central nervous system, for example, were thought to be logarithmically connected.¹⁸⁵ Wölfflin did psycho-physical exercises when studying philosophy and psychology at University. He commented in his notebook at the time: "should be happy to get to know the exact method. These people want to capture everything by numbers. What are numbers!".¹⁸⁶ Such a note shows Wölfflin's negative attitude towards capturing psychological phenomena in purely statistical and *naturwissenschaftliche* notions. Wölfflin was most likely influenced in his opinions of Fechner's ideas by his teacher, Lipps.

Theodor Lipps developed, in contrast to the 'mathematisation' of psychology by Fechner, his concept of *Einfühlung*, empathy. The object of aesthetic experience is permeated by feelings and psychological and emotional states. The experience of an object is the experience of form, in which the perception of and the emotions projected into the object are indistinguishable. Responsive actions and projection of the subject's feeling and bodily consciousness into an object result in the intuited

¹⁸³ Cf. Fechner's *Vorschule der Ästhetik* (1876).

¹⁸⁴ Schneider (1997), p. 131.

¹⁸⁵ Schneider (1997), p. 134.

¹⁸⁶ Notebook 12 (1885/86), p. 2. "Psychophysische Übungen. Soll mich freuen die exakte Methode kennen zu lernen. Möchten alles in Zahlen fassen, diese Leute. Was sind Zahlen!".

fact that object and subject are one.¹⁸⁷ Power and energy, the moments which are projected during the activity of empathy, the *Einfühlungsakt*, trigger a humanising, an anthropomorphising [*vermenslichen, beseelen*] of the experienced object.¹⁸⁸ Lipps wanted to create the basis for a 'Wissenschaft of immediate experience', to register and organise the contents of consciousness.¹⁸⁹ Perception for Lipps was not passive, but a consciousness which is actively engaged in the world.

These approaches branched into new areas of research, such as *Gefühlspsychologie*, the psychology of feeling, *Realpsychologie*, the psychology of the real, *Empfindungspsychologie*, the psychology of sensations, and *Erlebnispsychologie*, the psychology of lived experience, apart from Wölfflin's *Formpsychologie*, the psychology of form.

Wölfflin's text is distributed across philosophy with its different sub-disciplines. The complex circumstances of the academic field of philosophy as a matrix for several domains of knowledge which have crystallised as more separate disciplines only during the 20th century, were the conditions in which Wölfflin's ideas and theories developed. He managed to use essential concepts and theories without commitment to any of the various fields per se. The *Prolegomena* can be considered as *wissenschaftlich* firstly because of the psychological and empirical immediacy of architectural experience,

¹⁸⁷ Gauss (1973), p. 86; 88.

¹⁸⁸ Schneider (1997), p. 140.

¹⁸⁹ Jarzombek (2000), p. 40.

and secondly because of the conceptual investigation of the nature of the subject. The amalgamation of issues and methodologies from different fields by Wölfflin makes it difficult to place him intellectually. The text belongs to many strands of thought but to none completely. Wölfflin developed his very own theoretical notion of the body and its mechanisms, combining various influences, with which he then formulated his conception and interpretation of architecture.

ARCHITECTURE

Wölfflin's theory of architecture is quite different from the more prevalent and conventional ideas about architecture of the late 19th century. Other theorists considered architecture in terms of use and function, materials or modes of construction, while Wölfflin focused on a building's psychology which was established through the perception of the subject. In the text, he describes architecture as will, form and expression. These three aspects are not independent elements but are linked: the form of the architectural object is an expression of will. Form is a prominent characteristic of architecture. Form encapsulates and mediates the physical and psychological notions of bodiliness, and the anthropomorphic expression of will within architecture.

The Prolegomena allows us to trace Wölfflin's theory of architecture. In the text, he outlines the "basic elements (*Grundelemente*) of architecture" as "matter and form, gravity and force".¹⁹⁰ Wölfflin acknowledged his debt to Schopenhauer's notion of architecture which emphasises the physical aspects of "gravity

¹⁹⁰ Prolegomena, p. 15/158. "Stoff und Form, Schwere und Kraft". Also, Notebook 10 (1885), p. 45. "Die Elemente der Architektur: Stoff und Form".

and rigidity".¹⁹¹ Schopenhauer demarcated the objectification of matter and the conceptual themes of architectural form as the battle between support and load.¹⁹² But he denied architecture any aesthetic effect with regard to proportion or symmetry¹⁹³, apart from the notions of gravity, rigidity and cohesion, which are epitomised and articulated in the form.¹⁹⁴ The form of the architectural object is a manifestation or a depiction of its fundamental aspects and properties. While forms change their exterior appearance over time, the concepts of architecture, gravity and rigidity, remain always the same in their essence.

Wölfflin develops his notion of architecture with Schopenhauer's ideas in the back of his mind. Matter and form, gravity and force are conditions, for Wölfflin, which are experienced by the body of the subject. In the aesthetic experience, these bodily experiences are transferred onto architecture. Because of the concept of the psychologised body, the subject assumes an "immanent will" in the form of the architectural object.¹⁹⁵ Accordingly, Wölfflin defines architectural form as possessing a will. This anthropomorphic attribution means that the architectural object is based on the subject's properties. Wölfflin's entire approach to architectural history hinges on this anthropomorphic interpretation of form, as having and expressing a will.

¹⁹¹ *Prolegomena*, p. 17/159. "Schwere und Starrheit".

¹⁹² Schopenhauer (1844), vol. 1, § 43, p. 303 (of 1996 German edition).

¹⁹³ Schopenhauer (1844), vol. 2, book 3, chapter 35, 'On the Aesthetics of Architecture', p. 527 (of 1996 German edition).

¹⁹⁴ Schopenhauer (1844), vol. 2, book 3, chapter 35, p. 531 (of 1996 German edition). For Schopenhauer, of course, it is all about the idea (*Vorstellung*), the corporeal image of gravity and force in the form(s) of architecture, and not so much about the forms themselves.

¹⁹⁵ *Prolegomena*, p. 18/160.

The (inter)action of form with matter or within matter is a way to formulate architecture's evolution and changing expression through time.¹⁹⁶ Form, for Schopenhauer, is considered an expression of will, but this will is restricted to the tectonic characteristic of architecture, the gravity and rigidity of its structure and construction. Wölfflin supplements this purely tectonic conception of the architectural object with his own view of the aspects of gravity, rigidity, matter and form, in a new anthropomorphic sense of formal expression, as posture and movement. The horizontal and vertical articulations of the human body form an organic scheme of organisation¹⁹⁷ which functions in the perception of architecture. These aspects of the subject constitute Wölfflin's theory of an embodied architecture.

The architectural form is associated with the physical dimension which is experienced by the subject. Wölfflin writes in a notebook: "form = order in matter; order is conceptual".¹⁹⁸ Form is a physical aspect (shape) of bodiliness, while the anthropomorphic order relates the body to the architectural form, and belongs also to the register of perception and the *Einfühlungs*-process. In the text, Wölfflin notes that "form is action"¹⁹⁹ and "ornament is an expression of excessive force of form"²⁰⁰. Wölfflin explains this further in chapter two of the *Prolegomena*, when architecture is seen as the expression of "the opposition between matter and 'force of form' (*Formkraft*)".²⁰¹ Similarly in a notebook, Wölfflin wrote: "architecture

¹⁹⁶ *Prolegomena*, p. 18/160.

¹⁹⁷ *Prolegomena*, p. 15/158.

¹⁹⁸ Notebook 10 (1885), p. 46. "(Form = Ordnung im Stoff; Ordnung ist geistig)".

¹⁹⁹ *Prolegomena*, p. 35/177. "Form ist Tat".

²⁰⁰ *Prolegomena*, p. 36/179. "Das Ornament ist Ausdruck überschüssiger Formkraft".

²⁰¹ *Prolegomena*, p. 17/159.

has to depict the successful battle of form with matter".²⁰² A year earlier, he noted: "in a building we have really the feeling, as if the individual parts have ordered and joined themselves together out of the unformed mass".²⁰³ Wölfflin understands the anthropomorphic expression of the object as the will of the architectural form. He observed in the text that "self-determination (*Selbstbestimmung*) is the first requirement. Every form must be sufficient reason in itself".²⁰⁴ He also wrote in a notebook that "artistically every thing has to carry the reasons for its form and has to show them. Everything has to be motivated".²⁰⁵ Wölfflin posits a certain autonomy of the expression of form, also suggested by the concept of *Formkraft*²⁰⁶, the power of form, which battles with matter. Form is the (motivated) expression of the 'will of form' or the 'will to form'. Form as a concept is hereby not just the shape or appearance of an object, but also architecture's internal tectonic identity. The antagonism between matter and 'force of form' or 'will to form' is expressed as gravity and rigidity in changing ways through time and cultures.

Architectural form is correlated to the organisation of the human body by Wölfflin. The connection of the body to traditional aesthetic properties of form, such as regularity, symmetry, proportion, and harmony, was substantiated not in the abstract terms exemplified in the 1886 text by Friedrich Vischer's meaning of the

²⁰² Notebook 9 (1885), p. 63. "Die Architektur hat den siegreichen Kampf der Form mit dem Stoff darzustellen".

²⁰³ Notebook 8 (1884), p. 145. "und wir haben bei einem Bauwerk wirklich das Gefühl, als hätten sich die einzelnen Teile selbst aus der ungebildeten Masse zusammengefügt und zusammengeordnet". My emphasis.

²⁰⁴ *Prolegomena*, p. 37/180. "Jede Form muss hinreichender Grund von sich selbst sein".

²⁰⁵ Notebook 9 (1885), p. 110. "künstlerisch muss jedes Ding die Gründe seiner Form in sich tragen und sie zeigen. Alles muss motiviert sein".

²⁰⁶ *Prolegomena*, p. 17/159.

'moments of form'.²⁰⁷ Rather it is the integration of these properties into a different philosophy of form, namely the bodily structure of the subject, the vertical and horizontal physical articulation and directionality of bodiliness. Wölfflin wrote in his notebook: "one should not forget that it is not the numbers which [relate and] behave to each other, but the masses, the forces [which] stand in a proportion to each other".²⁰⁸ Proportions were not a matter of numerical relations and ratios, that is, an essence, for Wölfflin, but a configuration of experience and perception. He considered the bodily experience of a building's or a room's proportions as more significant. This issue emphasises Wölfflin's notion of the material and physical experience of architecture. When one moves through a building, one does not think of measurements and numerical proportional relations as such, but one responds to the material and physical impact of the volumes and masses of the structure. The language of the bodily and psychological *Einfühlung* of the subject was conceived in distinction from mathematical principles of normative aesthetics. For Wölfflin, the *Erlebnis*, the lived experience of the corporeal organisation-scheme of the subject's body and its posture within the architectural field (verticality and horizontality) are more relevant than the abstract notion of mathematical proportions.

Architectural form is further connected, in terms of bodiliness, to the body-image of the subject. The human body-image is a construct based upon the bodily posture, the experience of the

²⁰⁷ *Prolegomena*, p. 20ff/162ff.

²⁰⁸ Notebook 9 (1885), p. 35. "nur vergesse man nicht, dass es nicht die Zahlen sind, die sich zueinander verhalten, sondern die Massen, Kräfte stehen in einem Verhältnis zu einander".

motor-senses and bodily movement. It refers to an ontological and existential understanding of the body's spatiality. The human body-image is a pivotal factor in architectural experience; its elements establish and cultivate the spatial understanding of architecture. The perception of space by the subject is a psychological synthesis between empirical or sensory experience and the spatial intuitions which originate in the body and particularly in body-images in the consciousness.

The architectural concept of the body is also related to fantasy. Wölfflin talks about the *Formphantasie*, 'fantasy of form', as part of the organic understanding of the history of forms.²⁰⁹ He again bases this 'fantasy of form' on the subject's intellectual faculties. The 'will of form' or the 'fantasy of form' is a construct, an experiment through which to explore the evolution of architectural forms. It is an approach to form, quite independent of, what Wölfflin calls, the "materialistic nonsense" of architectural history -the understanding of architecture according to its construction techniques, materials, functions.²¹⁰

In the text of his doctoral dissertation, Wölfflin developed three interlaced theories of architecture as will, as form and as expression. This project attempts to formulate a new dimension to the idea of architecture, which analyses architecture in psychological and bodily terms. For Wölfflin, *Formpsychologie*, psychology of form, was a *Wissenschaft* which focused on the psychological response of the subject when having an aesthetic experience.

²⁰⁹ *Prolegomena*, p. 41/184. Translated as 'form imagination' in the English version.

²¹⁰ *Prolegomena*, p. 42/185.

Wölfflin defines the field of a psychology of architecture as the "description and explanation of the emotional effects of buildings".²¹¹ This notion of a psychology of architecture involves the identification of architecture as something with the faculties or functions similar to the (human) subject. This is an object-subjectification²¹², that is, an object (architecture) is seen as correlative and analogous to a certain extent to the subject, as having a psychological dimension (will and expression) to it.

The architectural object in its physical corporeality expresses a mood because the subject understands everything according to the patterns of its own being and constitution. Kant based his 'Copernican Revolution' on this assumption; in his first critique, Critique of Pure Reason (1781) he argued that we can only ever gain knowledge about the appearance of things, their phenomenal dimension, but never really know about the things-in-themselves, their noumenal dimension.²¹³ Wölfflin uses Kant's approach in his psychological basis for the subject to understand the architectural object by focusing on the shared property of bodiliness, that is, the

²¹¹ *Prolegomena*, p. 7/150.

²¹² Note the similarity and difference to the neighbouring notion of 'subject-objectification', which I consider to be the conception of an objectified subject, a subject understood as object. To a certain degree this concept is related to the present discussion in so far as the subject's body's physicality can be posited in its corporeality as object among objects.

²¹³ Cf. Preface to the second edition of 1787; also section one, part two, book 2, third major piece (I. *Transzendente Elementarlehre, zweiter Teil, 2. Buch, drittes Hauptstück: "Von dem Grunde der Unterscheidung aller Gegenstände überhaupt in Phaenomena und Noumena"*).

physical and mental existence and constitution of subject and object.²¹⁴ Wölfflin writes that

in the *Körperwelt* [literally the world of bodies, implying both the human body and objects, translated in the English version as physical world] forms become meaningful to us only because we recognise, perceive in them the expression of a feeling soul [*fühlende Seele*]. Spontaneously, instinctively [*unwillkürlich*] we animate each object [*beseelen wir jedes Ding*].²¹⁵

For Wölfflin, the realisation of the will of the object, as self-determination, is a precondition of beauty.²¹⁶ This is one of the few times that Wölfflin uses the aesthetic concept of beauty. Whereas other aesthetic theories produce extensive notions of beauty (cf. Kant, Volkelt, Lipps), Wölfflin barely touches the topic. And he uses this traditional concept to mark out something quite distinct. The pleasure of beauty is regarded as a mechanism that engages the will of the object to realise and fulfil its formal potential, that is, to develop its matter fully, to exist as complete formal realisation. Based on this, echoing Riegl's *Kunstwollen*²¹⁷, as well as Schopenhauer, the form of the object is supposedly an authentic product understood by the subject on equal terms and intuitively, that is as another will that expresses itself in form. In architecture, the apparent autonomy of the object, as the expression of a will to form, might even be called an *Architekturwollen*.

The conceptual connection of will, form and expression, in Wölfflin's theory is one of his most significant themes, and is exemplified by his anthropomorphic and bodily language. The

²¹⁴ Mallgrave and Ikonomou (1994), p. 43.

²¹⁵ *Prolegomena*, p. 10/152.

²¹⁶ *Prolegomena*, p. 19/161.

²¹⁷ *Kunstwollen* stands here in relation to the meaning as developed in Riegl's early theory, which postulated that art, the formal character of art, is to a certain degree

architectural will of the object is interpreted as a psychological expression of form, and is thereby accessible to the bodiliness of the subject: we can understand architecture because we have a body. This is, of course, the basic element for Wölfflin in his search for principles of historical judgement, in order to conceptualise and understand the architecture of the past.

HISTORY

Wölfflin's text, from the first page, brings an historical dimension to his speculations. He names the 'art historian', as the person who is interested in, even dependent for a correct judgement and understanding upon this psychological expression of moods and bodily character in architecture.²¹⁸

While history as such is not of conceptual importance to Kant in his theories about aesthetic experience, it is, nonetheless, his notion of aesthetic experience which, in its interpretation by Dilthey as *Erlebnis*, has been used for the approach of historical studies. Accordingly, the interpretation of history, for Wölfflin, had to begin with the experience and the physicality of the artefacts. He wrote in a notebook "that only by means of the visible, the viewed [object] creates a correct idea of [a] past time".²¹⁹ Objects from the past are seen, even touched, and therefore, provide subjective perceptions, ideas and understanding. The experience of the subject, of observing the object, is the condition of the possibility to re-experience and relate to the past. This is a new interpretation of

autonomous, and this autonomy is realised through and by its own particular will, operating as subject so-to-speak.

²¹⁸ *Prolegomena*, p. 7/149.

²¹⁹ Notebook 12 (1886), p. 67. "...dass nur durch das Geschaute eine richtige Vorstellung von vergangenen Zeiten entsteht".

history; it implies that meaning in history was not fixed but changed with the culture, ideas and attitudes of the historian or subject who experiences the artefacts. For Wölfflin the immediacy of the experience, the *Erlebnis*, and, in more concrete terms, the experience of the bodiliness of subject and object, connects the architectural past to the present of the historian. The fundamentally anthropomorphic and psychological interpretation of the expressions of human life, experience and being in regard to, not only architecture but also clothing, provides Wölfflin with an epistemological and methodological model to understand architectural history intuitively. Wölfflin approaches architecture from the perspective of experience in order to understand it as an "immediate index of the psychological economy ... that gave rise to it".²²⁰ The experience of architecture is considered as a mechanism to transcend the purely historical. The physicality of the experience of gravity produces an understanding of architectural forms from within the subject through empathy. Empathy is a way to conceptualise the past and to historicise architecture. For it is the body, as the locus of comprehension, which conditions the subject's perceptions. Wölfflin calls this "historical psychology" and "psychological art history".²²¹

The connection of the body of the subject with the development of architectural forms is historicised by Wölfflin in anthropomorphic terms. He relates the history of architectural forms, via the body of the subject, to a biological paradigm in which the phases of life appear, implying birth, development, age, decline,

²²⁰ Berrios and Ridley (2001), p. 78.

²²¹ *Prolegomena*, p. 27/170.

and death, in his various specific comments on the late stages of a culture.²²² Such an evolutionary model for historical understanding and reasoning was rather conventional in the 19th century.

Wölfflin proposes a conception of architectural history which relates the architectural depiction and the psychological imitation of the ideals of posture and movement of the human body.²²³ The history of forms is an organic history expressed by the psychology of forms, *Formpsychologie*. Wölfflin specifies clothing as a primary way to express bodily deportment: "architecture corresponds to the costume of the period", architecture is considered as "*Zeitkostüm*".²²⁴

The notion of an artefact expressing the culture of a specific period in history had been developed within the conception of 'national character' by Herder, who coined the verb '*einfühlen*' for this notion²²⁵. It referred also to Hegel's concept of the *Zeitgeist*. While Hegel historicised the manifestation of the Absolute spirit within his system, in the movement from art to religion to philosophy, a cultural expression of a historicised period for Wölfflin is not a vehicle for this 'becoming' of spirit, but an end in itself. In his notebook, Wölfflin wrote: "different beauty as expression of different times; contact with cultural history; question: how does this and that form express themselves in this and that *Zeitgeist*?"²²⁶ This notebook entry shows Wölfflin's concern with the difference of historical periods and

²²² References to late antiquity *Prolegomena*, p. 39/182, and Gothic architecture *Prolegomena*, p. 35/177.

²²³ *Prolegomena*, p. 41/183.

²²⁴ *Prolegomena*, p. 39/182. Costume of the time.

²²⁵ Marwick (1970), p. 37. "The desire to see the past from the inside ... was but a part of the great outpouring of the romantic imagination".

²²⁶ Notebook 8 (1884/85), p. 169. "...das verschiedene Schöne als Ausdruck der verschiedenen Zeiten, Berührung mit der Kulturgeschichte; Fragen: wie drückt sich in der und der Form der und der *Zeitgeist* aus?".

the historicity of form. The psychology of architecture is a "sensual expression (*sinnlicher Ausdruck*)"²²⁷ of these historical differences for Wölfflin. He also noted that "the philosophy of art [and architecture can be] based on a historical foundation: [to exemplify and categorise] the development of forms".²²⁸ Wölfflin conceived of the formal development of art and architecture through history as continually changing. Hegel, on the other hand, favoured 'content' over the formal aspects of art because of its immediate implications for the emerging presence and expression of the 'spirit', *Geist*. Wölfflin acknowledges the *geistiger* content of the world (*Weltinhalt*), but for him the significance lies in the fact that this *Weltinhalt* is expressed visibly in form. He commented in a notebook that "the arts are also forms in which the content of the world is captured; each new form illustrates another side of it".²²⁹ History is a rational and intelligible order for Hegel²³⁰, but Wölfflin uses the psychology of the body, the "*Empfindungsleben*", as he called it in a notebook²³¹, the life of emotions or sensations, to capture an historical order over time. Wölfflin wrote: "art should also be evaluated in view of what the contemporaries who made it, have felt".²³² This observation by Wölfflin shows that he realised that the motivation of aesthetic objects change over time, that contemporaries appreciated and apprehended art and architecture differently than later ages. In the *Prolegomena*, he takes clothing and artistic depictions of human

²²⁷ Notebook 8 (1884/85), p. 169.

²²⁸ Notebook 8 (1884/85), p. 170: "*Kunstphilosophie auf historischer Grundlage: Entwicklung der Kunstformen*".

²²⁹ Notebook 9 (1885), p. 106. "...die Künste sind auch Formen, in die der Weltinhalt gefasst wird; in jeder neuen Form zeigt er eine andre Seite)".

²³⁰ McCarney (2000), p. 90.

²³¹ Notebook 7 (1883), p. 20.

²³² Notebook 7 (1883), p. 19. "Die Kunst soll aber auch danach beurteilt werden, was die Zeitgenossen die sie schufen dabei fühlten".

bodies as indication and suggestion for the psychological states of the time, that is, how people felt about their bodies and how they expressed this in the forms of clothing and architecture. Clothing and images of human figures and postures are used to reconstruct the psychological and bodily attitude of the contemporaries of the architecture. Wölfflin conceives the development of bodily form in architecture, he writes: "any architectural style reflects the *posture and movement of people* in the period concerned".²³³ For Wölfflin, the posture, the mobility and the clothing of bodies, and architectural objects are the expression of psychological and bodily conditions as manifestations of form, and as such they have a history.

The development of forms, or rather the historicity of form, is part of architecture's being a psychological expression of the subject's bodiliness through time. Wölfflin argues in the text that "these psychological observations should be reduced to the human figure"²³⁴ to foster an understanding of the architecture of the past. This 'reduction' of the psychology of architecture to the aesthetic experience and expression of the body (posture, movement, clothing) needs to be interpreted not only as a comparison, but also as a conceptual connection. Wölfflin wrote in his notebooks: "history without principles has no purpose"²³⁵ and "art is the most immediate expression of a time".²³⁶ The affective human body is exactly the principle around which he constructs his conception of the history of architecture. As an example, Wölfflin supplements the reading and

²³³ *Prolegomena*, p. 39/182. "*Haltung und Bewegung der Menschen*". Wölfflin's emphasis.

²³⁴ *Prolegomena*, p. 40/182. "*Reduktion dieser psychischen Dinge auf die menschliche Gestalt*".

²³⁵ Notebook 7 (1883), p. 1. "*Geschichte ohne Prinzip = kein Zweck*".

understanding of the Gothic period with the notions of 'scholasticism' and 'spiritualism'.²³⁷ He considers 'scholasticism' and 'spiritualism' as underlying "psychological feelings" which are "transformed into bodily form", and which can be observed as organising principles in the medieval depiction of the human body.²³⁸ Wölfflin lists the characteristic expressions of the human figure of these notions: the narrow bridge of the noses, hard vertical folds of the forehead, the stiff and pulled together bodies, shoe forms with pointed toe, pointed hats, stretched out and excessively thin bodies.²³⁹ As Mallgrave and Ikonomou made clear, it is not solely the appearance of the human figure as such that mirrors the form of the architecture, but the underlying expressed 'mood'²⁴⁰, the psychological condition and reason for these specific bodily depictions and characterisations.

The problem of access to a historical past reflects a fundamental paradox of the notions of change and continuity within the philosophy of history. On the one hand, historical studies are characterised by the examination of particular situations, individuals, and conditions, which illustrate distinct identities that differ geographically, culturally, and chronologically. But the investigation of the past can also be understood and conceptualised as continuity, based on connections and similarity. Both contradictory notions form a general frame for Wölfflin's dissertation. He wants to account for the changes of architectural form over time and

²³⁶ Notebook 8 (1884), p. 72. "*Kunst: der anschaulichste Ausdruck einer Zeit*".

²³⁷ *Prolegomena*, p. 39f/182f.

²³⁸ *Prolegomena*, p. 40/182.

²³⁹ *Prolegomena*, p. 40f/183.

²⁴⁰ Mallgrave and Ikonomou (1994), p. 47.

between cultures, while, at the same time, presenting a general or universal and transcendent means and category (psychological bodiliness) to base these interpretations upon.

When Wölfflin presents the body as a concept in his theoretical inquiry into aspects of the nature and history of architecture, he writes, "the organisation of the human body is shown to be the constant denominator within all change".²⁴¹ Architecture is defined as the formal expression of the will of a culture, as "what a culture has to say"²⁴², because the empathic reading of architecture in its empirical experience is understood as based on the human body of the subject, and the psychological bodiliness which envelopes subject and object.

The body as historical paradigm was explored by Heidegger's phenomenological ideas; he commented on Nietzsche's understanding of the body, stating that "Nietzsche declared often enough in his later years that the body must be made the *guideline* of observation not only of humans but of the world".²⁴³ This reference relates to Wölfflin's comments in his notebooks. Wölfflin's explores architectural and cultural developments in history by merging anthropomorphic and epistemological dimensions of bodiliness. He noted: "history and philosophy supplement each other. Both treat the nature of the human subject, the one

²⁴¹ *Prolegomena*, p. 42/184. "die Organisation des menschlichen Körpers als der bleibende Nenner bei allem Wechsel".

²⁴² *Prolegomena*, p. 42/185. Cf. Herder expresses a similar idea in his *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (1784-1791): "everywhere on our Earth whatever could be, has been". (My emphasis).

²⁴³ Heidegger (1989), p. 509. My emphasis.

synthetically, the other analytically".²⁴⁴ Bodiliness is the principle with which one can understand changing notions and images of the body over time and, at the same time, demonstrate the nature of human perception. Wölfflin employs his inquiry into the theoretical and historical character of the body and architecture in order to speculate about the constitution and disposition of the subject, the *Mensch*, and the "history of humanity"²⁴⁵. Wölfflin further specified this idea: "the history of philosophy is the evolution of the idea of the human or anthropomorphic subject".²⁴⁶ The concept of the subject, with its philosophical and epistemological aspects, sets up and drives the architectural investigation.

Wölfflin's anthropomorphic language of his description and conception of architecture is the condition that underlies his psychological and also his historical ideas. The living body of the subject defines not only the subjective experience of bodily form which everybody has, but also the body as an organic pattern of form functioning as a universal denominator and interpretative mechanism across time and cultures. In this sense, this Wölfflinian body is a universal.²⁴⁷ History is founded upon a conception of bodiliness which provides an anthropomorphic theory of knowledge

²⁴⁴ Notebook 8 (1884), p. 97. "*Geschichte und Philosophie ergänzen sich gegenseitig. Beide behandeln das Wesen des Menschen, die eine synthetisch, die andere analytisch*".

²⁴⁵ Notebook 9 (1885), p. 75. "*die Geschichte der Menschheit*".

²⁴⁶ Notebook 8 (1884), p. 106. "*die Geschichte der Philosophie ist die Entwicklung der Idee des Menschen*".

²⁴⁷ Cf. comment by Wölfflin in a notebook: "I want to occupy myself only with the eternal in order to give my spirit/mind thereby eternity (*Ich möchte mich nur noch mit dem Ewigen beschäftigen um meinem Geiste selbst dadurch die Ewigkeit zu geben*)", Notebook 12 (1886), p. 17.

for architecture. Embodied architecture is for Wölfflin a "principle of historic judgement".²⁴⁸

Yet Wölfflin's descriptions of various notions of the body are problematic. On the one hand, the body is regarded as the site of the expression of attitudes, body-images and ideals about the body, and as such, part and parcel of architectural form. Architectural depictions of bodiliness freeze human ideas in time. Over time these bodily expressions change. On the other hand, the body is considered as a mechanism with which the subject can experience the architecture of the past, with which architecture can be interpreted as bodily expression of the people in the past. Here, the body is a concept which transcends history, to frame and relate the different historical versions of bodiliness. These two accounts of the body have different concerns. The first belongs to a theory of (architectural) form, the second fosters a theory of history. The first emphasises the discontinuous and the second the continuous aspect of bodiliness. Wölfflin's idea of bodiliness presents a certain contradiction. He has attributed two different functions to this concept: as theoretical speculation and as historical mechanism. These diverse implications of the body mark the discourse of the text as ambiguous. The complexity of the connection and the interweaving of fields create certain tensions and problems for the interpretation of the text. The 1886 text illustrates the condition of the discipline of art history, as it was evolving and emerging out of the various but related intellectual fields of aesthetics, philosophy, psychology, epistemology and anthropology.

²⁴⁸ *Prolegomena*, p. 39/182.

In the following part, Wölfflin's text will be connected to his more general concern for the history of *menschliche* (human) culture and the nature of the *Mensch* (subject) as such, with its connection to archival material. The text will be situated in a particular niche within the discourse of architectural theory. Wölfflin's exploration of the human subject portrayed in the *Prolegomena* is interpreted as a 'philosophical psychology project' within the realm of a *kulturgeschichtliche* anthropology, in which his University studies are contained. In his doctoral dissertation, Wölfflin nonetheless sets up the foundation for his art historical thinking of his entire career, which crucially involved the combination of conceptual and historical concerns.

the architectural search for self-knowledge

The analysis of the themes and implications of the text manifested the diversity of the fields involved - from philosophy, aesthetics, psychology, epistemology and ontology, to the philosophy of history, anthropology, art and architectural theory and their historical interpretations. The *Prolegomena* is a disciplinary conundrum. The significance of the range of disciplines lies not solely in the plurality of the threads Wölfflin used, but in the web of conditions and links across these fields which I attempt to capture in the concluding section of this chapter. Wölfflin's philosophical and psychological explorations of architecture show that these territories of knowledge were conceptually linked and that they make possible Wölfflin's theory of a *Kulturgeschichte des Menschen*, of a cultural history of the subject.

Quotations from his notebooks show that most of his trains of thought come from a concern for the human subject and its cultural production and engagement. With references to the unpublished archival material, Wölfflin's intention to focus on the *menschlches*, human element of culture (particularly with respect to art and architecture) becomes apparent. This *kulturhistorische* and *wissenschaftliche* anthropology, *Kulturgeschichtswissenschaft des Menschen*, is centred in the 1886 text on the subject in terms of bodiliness. Wölfflin's interest generated my characterisation of the

text as a 'philosophical psychology project' which was positioned by Wölfflin in the disciplinary context of architecture. The text is an 'architectural search for self-knowledge' of the subject. Architecture is the cultural and historical frame with which the subject is explored. The text, therefore, functioned not only as a critique of conventional notions of architecture and of the conception of history in the architectural discourse, but also as speculation about the nature of the subject. In the context of art historical scholarship, the text was, moreover, a critique of the current 19th century practice of art history.

In the immediate discourse of Wölfflin's doctoral thesis, the literary mode of the dissertation given in the title is crucial for an understand of the text. A 'prolegomenon' is a set of critical remarks in an initial or early proposal, sketch or configuration of a field which is at the beginning stage, to be developed and defined further. Wölfflin explicitly refers to the term "*Entwurf*"¹, outline, blueprint in the preliminary section of his text, emphasising the exploratory, tentative and provisional character of his approach to the topic, a 'psychology of architecture'. The title also refers to the theoretical nature of the text. Wölfflin is aware that he is delving into a field which has not yet been explored. He implies and acknowledges therefore the limits of his speculations.

Although the *Prolegomena* is a doctoral thesis in philosophy, it aims to construct concepts for a *wissenschaftliche* art history. The

¹ *Prolegomena*, p. 7/149.

arena of art history is mingled here with philosophical, psychological and epistemological dimensions. All fields involved had links to each other. The notion of aesthetic experience, derived from the Kantian tradition of philosophical aesthetics, was pivotal for the emergent field of psychology. The theory of empathy, *Einfühlung*, in particular, involves psychology's engagement with aesthetic theory. Within the field of aesthetics, the notion of form is related not only to the object but also to the subject in the concept of bodiliness: as scheme of organisation and as expression of will. The psychological fields of empathy and bodily experience lead Wölfflin to a particular definition of architecture. His thesis aimed at an interpretation and understanding of architecture in its historical dimension.

This brief account of the different layers of the theories and fields of knowledge emphasises the text's disciplinary conundrum. It was mentioned earlier that many of the domains of knowledge in the text still had a connection to philosophy and did not have an independent existence as academic disciplines when Wölfflin wrote the *Prolegomena* in the late 19th century. Only in the 20th century have some of these areas emerged as individual disciplines, such as psychology and anthropology. The relations of themes and concepts present the various contexts within which the 1886 text is to be situated. The numerous frames of reference show the doctoral dissertation as a particular 'Wölfflinian' discourse in which a complexity of interchanges of related fields is of primary historiographical concern.

Within this context, Jarzombek argued that Wölfflin "purposefully blurs distinctions and confuses boundaries" to create a synthesis of ideas which is "homeless in that it avoids disciplinary

placement".² This argument is problematic since it assumes the disciplinary demarcations of various fields which were not yet substantiated in the late 19th century. I am quite uncertain about Wölfflin's awareness of the 'intellectual potentiality' and 'theoretical cunning' -Jarzombek called it "anti-disciplinary cunning"³- and the supposed cleverness of the disciplinary conundrum in his reasoning. Nor am I clear about his reading of Wölfflin's intention, in the sense of a *conscious avoidance* of a direct problematisation of the disciplinary connections and relations. Rather, the connections of the diverse fields of knowledge were a condition of the text and Wölfflin's thinking. When Jarzombek talks about the "advantages Wölfflin gained in crossing the disciplinary boundaries"⁴, I doubt whether Wölfflin perceived any disciplinary boundaries in the first place. The central thrust of his dissertation is the conceptual affinity and unity that is the subject. He wrote, rather prosaically, in a notebook: "the age-old question appears again in front of the soul: What is the human subject? ... What is the permanent!".⁵ In my view, this shows that Wölfflin felt the need to construct a philosophical ground for his art historical thinking. Accordingly, he considered the nature of bodily perception of the subject, by focusing on the psychological notion of empathy with which his theory of architecture and historical analysis then could be substantiated. Wölfflin explored philosophical ideas about bodiliness in the aesthetic experience of the subject in the 'more concrete niche'⁶ of architectural history. This project shows his concern for the cultural

² Jarzombek (2000), p. 41. My emphasis.

³ Jarzombek (2000), p. 54.

⁴ Jarzombek (2000), p. 54.

⁵ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 47. "*tritt die uralte Frage wieder vor die Seele: Was ist der Mensch?... Was ist das Bleibende!*".

engagement of the human subject in architecture. The 1886 text attempts to answer the questions: 'what is the nature of the human subject in relation to architecture?' and 'what is the nature of architecture in relation to the human subject?'. The *Prolegomena* is Wölfflin's 'philosophical psychology project' in the architectural search for self-knowledge.

The text can be interpreted as the interface between philosophy and architectural theory in the practice of art history. Wölfflin's elucidation of the philosophical theories and notions of Kant, Dilthey, Schopenhauer and Hegel, in his thesis, have bequeathed to art history and architectural theory philosophical and psychological dimensions within the historical framework. He wrote in a notebook:

The history of art can be successfully treated (philosophically), in as much as one presents the necessary developmental sequences in their interrelated connection, and by uncovering the nature of the artistic mind, imagination, which itself exists in apriori ideas, one practices philosophy.⁷

The text is 'philosophical' because concepts, such as 'bodiliness', present notions of the subject and of perception with which a history of art, architecture or culture can be constructed. The conception of bodiliness is a philosophical exploration of the physical and psychological nature of the subject. A further philosophical dimension lies in the notion of *Wissenschaft* as a means to 'ground' knowledge and as an analysis of a particular pattern of reasoning

⁶ When compared to a purely philosophical examination.

⁷ Notebook 8 (1884/85), p. 151. „Geschichte der Kunst, kann insofern mit Erfolg (philosophisch) behandelt werden, dass man die notwendigen Entwicklungsstufen als solche in ihrem durchgehenden Zusammenhang darstellt und in dem man so das Wesen des künstlerischen Geistes aufdeckt, das selbst in apriorischen Ideen besteht, übt man Philosophie“.

and conceptual mapping of intellectual assumptions, such as the concepts of the body⁸. Although Wölfflin wants to engage philosophy with a *wissenschaftliche* technique, he noted in a notebook, "philosophy [is] not the *Wissenschaft* of our time. Icy contempt. Only the historian enjoys trust".⁹ The dominance of philosophy as the leading discourse of the *Geisteswissenschaften* had been eclipsed by historical studies by the later 19th century. Wölfflin follows this trend to a certain extent, in his inquiry into the comprehension of architectural history, but, still crucially, he bases the derivation of the history of embodied architecture on aspects of the subject which are essentially philosophical speculations.

Wölfflin's project adheres to a 'psychology' as a sub-division of philosophy. In the text, the psychologised body of an embodied architecture connects subject and object, and is focused on aesthetic experiences and bodily responses of perception and conception. Dilthey's concept of *Erlebnis* was an ideal notion for the re-experience of the past because it gave Wölfflin access to the psychological and bodily conditions of the architecture of a historical period. The field of psychology is also epitomised in the empirical method, as a (supposedly) exact and *wissenschaftliche* aspect of the study of the subject.

The text as a 'project' belongs to a bigger picture. I want to argue that it can be located within Wölfflin's own conception and practice of *Kulturgeschichte*, a history of culture, which he

⁸ The concept of the body is of particular significance for Wölfflin's philosophical method because it provides him with a notion that the subject is theoretically and empirically 'perpetually the same', what King (1983) characterised as "eternalistic pathos, ... as remaining forever unchanged and changelessness" (p. 187); and although every subject has a body, the actual body images and body fantasies, and, therefore, how other bodies are comprehended, differ from subject to subject.

developed during his University studies. In his first semester at the University of Basle, Wölfflin devised a *Lebensplan*, a life plan, more or less a summary of the interests and concerns which guided his University studies. He wrote about it in a letter to his parents, stating that he wants to study

Kulturgeschichte ... [as] the development of each human being... In the cultural historian, the philosopher and the artist interconnect (*durchdringen sich*). The artistic (*das Künstlerische*) lies in the historical reconstruction, philosophy, though, has to measure all human works according to their underlying ideas.¹⁰

Wölfflin regarded *Kulturgeschichte* as the particular endeavour to investigate "human nature" ("*das Wesen des Menschen*")¹¹ which envelopes and connects most immediately philosophy and the arts. He distinguished between the theoretical exploration of this field in philosophical terms: "the centre of modern philosophy is the subject"¹², and the historical dimension of artistic expressions. Both concerns were relevant for him. In his notebooks he wrote: "philosophy: the *Wissenschaft* of the humanly (*vom Menschlichen*)"¹³, "my leading thought: the ideal of humanity"¹⁴, and "search everywhere for the subject, the historically developing subject"¹⁵.

Wölfflin's father was concerned about his son's plans. He wrote a letter to his old friend Burckhardt who he asked to talk to his

⁹ Notebook 12 (1886), p. 57. „Philosophie [ist] nicht die Wissenschaft unserer Zeit. Eilige Verachtung. Allein der Historiker genießt Vertrauen"

¹⁰ Gantner (1982), p. 10. Letter to parents from Dec. 1st 1882.

¹¹ Notebook 8 (1884), p. 97.

¹² Notebook 8 (1884), p. 71. "Das Zentrum der mod.[ernen] Philosophie ist der Mensch".

¹³ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 139.

¹⁴ Notebook 15 (1887/87), p. 171r. "Mein treib.[ender] Ged.[anke]: Ideal der Humanität".

¹⁵ Notebook 22 (1889), p. 80r. "Überall der Mensch zu suchen sein und zwar der histor[isch] sich entwickelnde Mensch".

son about this idea of studying *Kulturgeschichte*. Two weeks later, Wölfflin wrote to his parents in utter despair:

with effort and suffering did I build in the last few weeks my *Lebensgebäude*, the structure of my life, beautifully reaching the sky, and now this person [Burckhardt] comes and tears it all down with his practical and prosaic reflections. [Wölfflin describes what Burckhardt advised him to do at University:] He recommends to use half of the time to study old languages, and the other half should be concentrated on the later (*neuere*) literature, in French, Italian and English. "*Kulturgeschichte* [Burckhardt said to the young Wölfflin] is a vague term/concept, everybody understands something different. At the moment it is nothing yet. Be studious ... after four or six semesters you will automatically have found the right direction." ... [Wölfflin writes] I will never forget these minutes [of his conversation with Burckhardt].¹⁶

Half a year later, Wölfflin noted in his diary: "wherever I go, the competent men have an aversion to the study of culture. Bernays¹⁷ frowned meaningfully".¹⁸ Wölfflin apparently told his teachers about his plans to specialise in *Kulturgeschichte*; but they all reacted negatively. *Kulturgeschichte*, according to Riehl¹⁹, "still such a young science, might be in its final completion the only true philosophy of history, ... the true history of life (*Geschichte des Lebens*)".²⁰ Archival material indicates that Wölfflin continued to think about *Kulturgeschichte*, particularly in respect to the nature of the subject. In my opinion, the reactions of his teachers did not really deter Wölfflin from his inclination and plans; on the contrary, he seemed to respond to their worries in his deliberately broad choice of studies. The variety of classes he took, in history, literature, art history, but mainly philosophy, does not only illustrate his uncertainty about his major subject (in view of formulating a doctoral thesis in one of these academic subjects) but also outlines quite clearly Wölfflin's conception of culture. As suggested in the *Prolegomena*,

¹⁶ Gantner (1982), p. 11. Letter to parents from Dec. 14th 1882.

¹⁷ Michael Bernays was Wölfflin's professor in literature at the University of Munich.

¹⁸ Gantner (1982), p. 15. Notebook 7, p. 10v. May 6th 1883.

architecture is *Kultur*, and pertains to the quintessentially human element of bodiliness. The *objects of culture* are comprehended as expressions of the will in form, they are human products. The *subjects of culture*, the individual and the community find, make and construct their identity by understanding the cultural field as tradition, as their present and their past, as their history.

It is architecture as a *cultural* product of the subject that interests Wölfflin. In his architectural analysis, he wants to illustrate the dimensions of culture, as they define the nature of the subject. *Kulturgeschichte* and *Kulturwissenschaft* are part of a general cultural psychology and anthropology.²¹ In this respect, Wölfflin wrote in his notebook: "I wish nothing higher than to find a way into the nature of the human being"²², and "the historian of humanity has to be a psychologist. He shows the forms of humanity, of the life of the soul ... the philosophical historian who deals with the nature of the subject"²³. The subject involved a philosophical field of knowledge and a cultural field of practice, in terms of expression and production. "History will be the task of my life", Wölfflin recorded in his notebook, that is "...the evolution of the human subject ...as revealed in art and philosophy".²⁴ Later, he made plans to "travel: see countries and people. Primitive people, where they can be

¹⁹ Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl was *Kulturhistoriker* teaching at the University of Munich.

²⁰ Gantner (1982), p. 17. Notebook 7, p. 34r. August 3rd 1883.

²¹ Of course, Wölfflin, at the end of the 19th century, had a different idea about cultural anthropology than the identity of the field that emerged in the 20th century as academic discipline. Wölfflin, in my opinion, wished to consider the variety, diversity as well as similarity of cultures, based on the notion of a universal humanness (*Menschlichkeit*) or humanity (*Menschheit*) in its anthropological generality. He writes: "the entire societal-historical reality, i.e. the whole human being understood historically and speculatively, that is the goal that one never wishes to lose sight of." (Notebook 9, (1885), p. 18r).

²² Notebook 8 (1884), p. 103. "*Ich wünsche mir nichts Höheres als einzudringen in das Wesen des Menschen*".

observed easily. Anthropology, ethnography, geography".²⁵ These comments, I believe, suggest that Wölfflin wanted to work and think within the realm of *Kulturgeschichte*. He stated: "the history of culture shows the development of the human being, art shows us its body".²⁶ Aesthetic experience and bodiliness implicate the totality of the human being (*den ganzen Menschen*), mind and body, identity, culture and history. Wölfflin is interested in the "general-humanly (*das Allgemein-Menschliche*)".²⁷ He focused on the generally human dimension of architecture within *Kulturgeschichte* when he asked: "how do matter and form behave in all cultural circles".²⁸ He specified this idea further: "explore matter and form not terminologically²⁹, but as cultural history".³⁰ *Kulturgeschichte* is not to be understood as factual data collection of different cultures by Wölfflin; he clearly wants to engage with this field of diversity in a more unified, transcendental and synthetic way, that is in a philosophical manner. He wrote: "only ideas, not persons. Systematic examination. [This] presupposes the knowledge of the individual, capturing the synthesis, precisely in artistic form and philosophical spirit".³¹ Wölfflin attempts to concentrate on the more general aspects of the subject within the fields of art and architecture (and their history), which are, of course, mediated and

²³ Notebook 15 (1887-1888), p. 30. "Der Geschichtsschreiber der Menschheit muss Psychologe sein. Er zeigt Formen der Humanität, des Seelenlebens ... philosophische Geschichtsschreiber, der das Menschenwesen zum Gegenstand hat".

²⁴ Gantner (1982), p. 16. Notebook 7, p. 12r. May 22nd 1883.

²⁵ Notebook 12 (1885/86), p. 2v. "Reisen: Länder und Völker sehn. Urvölker, wo die noch einfach sich beobachten lassen. Anthropologie, Ethnographie, Geographie".

²⁶ Notebook 8 (1884), p. 134. "Die Kulturgeschichte zeigt die Entwicklung des Menschen, die Kunst zeigt uns seinen Leib".

²⁷ Notebook 12 (1886), p. 15v.

²⁸ Notebook 6 (1885), p. 96. "wie verhält sich Stoff und Form auf allen Kulturkreisen".

²⁹ As he did in his analytical presentation in Dilthey's philosophy class.

³⁰ Notebook 12 (1885/86), p. 11v. "Stoff und Form nicht terminologisch, sondern kulturhistorisch zu behandeln".

based upon the analysis of particular situations and objects. In his doctoral dissertation he works on the principles of the subject's understanding of architecture (including references to painting, sculpture, clothing, jewellery, etc.) in their historical dimension. In Renaissance and Baroque, he investigates -on the basis of the foundations set out in the Prolegomena- architectural objects in a more defined manner and limited timeframe, the bodily effects of Renaissance and Baroque architecture in Rome in the 16th century. But even in the Principles of Art History of 1915, where he develops five pairs of *Grundbegriffe*, the categories of the Classical and the Baroque, and where his discussion is based upon particular examples, works and illustrations, in painting, sculpture and architecture, the text is still predicated on the involvement of the subject (in terms of visual modes of production and reception).

I am arguing that Wölfflin's goal, a history and *Wissenschaft* of human culture, is consistent throughout his entire career and his textual output.³² The specificity of empathy theory connected to aesthetics, philosophy and psychology, is part and parcel of Wölfflin's theory and approach to art and architectural history. This particular framework of empathy and bodiliness, however, is not explicitly mentioned in later texts. But it continues to have an indirect and implicit theoretical influence.³³ In the Prolegomena, the foundations for Wölfflin's art historical thinking are laid with the

³¹ Notebook 12 (1886), p. 56. "nur Ideen, nicht Personen. Systematische Behandlung. Setzt die Kenntnis des Einzelnen voraus, vollzieht nur die Synthese und zwar in künstl.[erische] Form und philos.[ophischer] Geist".

³² This argument is particularly constituted by the archival material of the notebooks in conjunction with the published texts.

implications and conceptions of philosophy and *Wissenschaft*. The concerns of history and methodology are developed more prominently in the later texts.

With regard to history, Wölfflin presents in his doctoral thesis an introduction to his conceptions of and approach to art historical thinking. The problem of the subject within history is incorporated in terms of bodiliness. The text is not about history as such, but makes references to this dimension; it is a *base* for historical investigations in the dimension of *Wissenschaft*. *Kulturgeschichte* itself is a concept that is based upon historical understanding, as in Dilthey's *verstehen durch erleben*, understanding through experience. In a notebook Wölfflin writes: "for *Kulturgeschichte* a systematic treatment is necessary".³⁴ This is a programmatic concern to combine "aesthetics with *Kulturgeschichte* in a new art history on an empirical-psychological base".³⁵ Wölfflin is looking for a framework to integrate and align the empirical, physical and psychological with the theoretical elements of subject and object within architectural history. His understanding of architecture aims at a *begriffliches Verstehen*, a conceptual comprehension, of the past, in order to explore universal aspects of culture and the subject. Wölfflin searches for a more general *Wissenschaft* of *Kultur* as part of the investigation into the heritage and tradition³⁶ of the subject, in terms of the identity and the structure of architecture. The

³³ Specific references to the themes and concepts developed in the *Prolegomena* will be made in the next chapters which analyse Wölfflin's further development and theoretical evolution in regard to his conception of *Kulturgeschichte*.

³⁴ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 137.

³⁵ Locher (2001), p. 380. Locher mentions that the last section of the *Prolegomena* was initially entitled: 'The Idea of a Psychology as Organon for Art History'.

³⁶ The evolution of Wölfflin's notion of 'tradition' is further thematised in the 1931 book: *Kunst der Renaissance: Italien und das deutsche Formgefühl* (strangely translated as *The Sense of Form in Art: A Comparative Psychological Study*).

Kulturgeschichte of architecture should provide knowledge about the change and diversity, as well as the continuity of the subject and culture through history, which is characterised by Wölfflin as the "accidentally existent (*zufällig Vorhandenes*)".³⁷ The body and bodiliness provide individuality, as well as continuity and generality to the notion of the subject, and thereby function as anthropological and philosophical "apriori concepts, *Begriffe*".³⁸ The combination of those two oppositional notions of continuity and discontinuity is the task and paradox of any conceptualisation of cultural history, of any "historical reconstruction"³⁹. In the *Prolegomena*, the human body is employed as a mechanism to register the nature of both, the change and the continuity of the subject in architectural forms. Wölfflin stated in a notebook that he attempts "on the one hand a philosophy of art [here focusing on architecture], and, on the other hand, a history [of it]".⁴⁰ The interrelation between the conceptual and the material spheres of bodiliness and experience characterise Wölfflin's ideas of art history and architectural theory. This combination and oscillation between aspects of history and theory make the 1886 text ambiguous: it seems unclear whether Wölfflin is writing theory or history.⁴¹ Only references from the archival material allow us to separate these threads analytically which Wölfflin folded together in the subject and bodiliness.

³⁷ Notebook 6 (1882), p. 53v.

³⁸ Notebook 6 (1882), p. 35v.

³⁹ Notebook 6 (1882), p. 35v.

⁴⁰ Notebook 7 (1883), p. 19. "*einerseits eine Philosophie der Kunst, andererseits eine Geschichte*".

⁴¹ Wölfflin is not writing theory nor history per se. His texts and ideas involve a distinct co-presence of both these fields, in which they are so thoroughly intertwined, it is difficult to separate them. And if done, as attempted here, one realises the intellectual incoherence of the individual domains. For Wölfflin's conception of

Wölfflin's concern with the subject pertains to an attempt to reconnect forms and content of life. The project created its own line of argumentation from a psychology of bodiliness to an embodied architecture. The experience of bodiliness with regard to the psychology of architecture is a way to expand the subjective self into a consciousness of the expression of the life of the object. The text aspires to respond to the anthropological task of comprehending the subject and its cultural (*Aus-*) *Bildung*, formulation and formation. Wölfflin specified this in a notebook: "to develop and cultivate organs, to feel things outside myself, to search for forms, to capture the content of the world, that is the human duty".⁴² The living experience, the *Erlebnis*, is a way to understand architecture, culture and the world. The implications and connotations of the text propose to view the subject as a point of conception of culture. Furthermore, Wölfflin's seeks an understanding of culture in an historical sense, how to historicise the object, and on an epistemological level, how we can know and relate to past culture(s). The solution to these two problems was the body. Wölfflin's aim to conceive architecture as *allgemein menschliches*, a human terrain of culture, with the help of the concept of bodiliness is an 'architectural search for self-knowledge'.

Wölfflin's text is the presentation of a specific approach to architecture. The proposal is to view architecture in a way that employs various philosophical arenas, chiefly aesthetics and

history and theory is located on the threshold between their epistemological identities and properties.

⁴² Notebook 12 (1885/86), p. 1. "Organe zu bilden, die Dinge ausser mir zu fühlen zu können, Formen zu suchen, den Weltinhalt zu fassen, das ist die Aufgabe des Menschen".

psychology. Architecture, as the expression of the psychological embodiment of the subject is Wölfflin's most significant theoretical conception in his dissertation. Psychological bodiliness is an absolute concept for Wölfflin, functioning as an apriori notion of identity, expression, experience and observation by the subject. This means architectural form is discussed apart from but also in reference and response to the conventional, professional and academic frameworks and ideas about architecture. Wölfflin's definition of architecture is set in opposition to the then contemporary definitions of architecture. These ideas involved issues of construction, materiality and functionality, symbols, responses to climate, as well as classifications of dates, facts and biographical information. In the text, Wölfflin calls these more prevalent conceptions of architecture "material nonsense".⁴³

The architectural discourse of the 19th century was "conditioned by the problem of self-expression: how to conceive and craft a 'style of our time'".⁴⁴ Wölfflin's theory of architecture as the expression of will and form responds to the dilemma of 19th century historicism and revival architecture. His definition of architecture in the psychological and physical reception of the observer, what he called "*Perzeptionsvermögen*" in a notebook⁴⁵, indicates a "notion of self-experience through architecture".⁴⁶ This conception of architecture leads to a different ordering of architectural knowledge. The architectural revivals of historical styles multiplied the experiences and diversified the cultural meaning of

⁴³ *Prolegomena*, p. 42/185. "materialistischer Unfug".

⁴⁴ Hvattum (2004), p. 149. Cf. Hübsch's text: *In what Style should we build?, In welchem Stil sollen wir bauen?*, Karlsruhe, 1828.

⁴⁵ Notebook 15 (1887/88), p. 8r.

⁴⁶ Buddensieg (1999), p. 262.

architecture. To experience a medieval(-looking) building became an aspect of contemporary identity in the 19th century, as, for instance, in the Houses of Parliament and the Royal Courts of Justice in London. These buildings had associations with the Middle Ages, they made this past time present, as experience and as a factor in contemporary identity.⁴⁷ Architectural historicism was a reproduction of historical settings and styles to be experienced in the present. Wölfflin's architectural theory of empirical bodily experience furthered -in conceptual terms- the acculturation and appropriation of the architectural past by the present. The architectural experience of the past as newly-constructed present presented the built condition characterising Wölfflin's surroundings⁴⁸ and shaped his theory of architecture to a significant extent.

Towards the end of the text, Wölfflin states that he does not aim to give a "complete(d) psychology of architecture"⁴⁹, but merely "hope[s] to have made one idea manifest: an organic understanding of the history of forms will be possible only when we know with what threads our form-imagination (*Formphantasie*) is bound to human nature".⁵⁰ The sentence demonstrates how interwoven he imagined the relation to be between his ideas of bodiliness and architectural form.

The three-dimensionality of bodiliness implies a particular notion of space. Spatiality is implicated in the understanding of the vertical and horizontal organisation and directionality of the subject.

⁴⁷ A newly built medieval-looking building, housing agencies involved in contemporary life, making and shaping contemporary life, has different connotations for the cultural identity of the present than an original medieval structure, even if still in use.

⁴⁸ Munich and Berlin had many newly constructed historicist buildings when Wölfflin studied there.

⁴⁹ *Prolegomena*, p. 41/183f.

Wölfflin wrote in a notebook: "space is in itself formless, we judge it according to the three perpendicular directions" which the subject experiences in its being and movement.⁵¹ Without formulating an explicit theory of space, Wölfflin defines architecture in terms which suggest a fundamentally spatial understanding of architecture.

The critique of conventional notions of architecture is also an emblem of the *Verwissenschaftlichung*, 'scientification', and *Wissenschaftswerdung*, the emergence as *wissenschaftliche* discipline, of architectural theory and art history. As was seen in Dilthey, these processes transformed many fields of knowledge in the 19th century, as part of a general legitimisation of the research, *Forschung*, in the humanities. Such methodological operations also effected and directed the practice of the discipline of art history. Within art history, the *Prolegomena* functions as a critique of the discipline, not only in terms of its forms of scholarship and art historical argument, but also in a historiographical sense. The concentration on the bodiliness of the object produced an affinity to psychology, as *Formpsychologie*. *Formpsychologie* and "Kunstpsychologie (psychology of art)"⁵² in the *Prolegomena*, with their assumptions of the immediacy of experience as a basis for an empirical *Wissenschaftlichkeit*, can be seen as part of the emerging field of professional art history. It has to be remembered that at this time the discipline of art history was claiming to be a *Wissenschaft* which would legitimise the discipline's academic status in the University curriculum.

⁵⁰ *Prolegomena*, p. 41/184.

⁵¹ Notebook 12 (1885/86), p. 4. "Der Raum ist an sich formlos, wir beurteilen ihn nach 3 senkr.[echt] aufeinanderstehenden Richtungen".

⁵² *Prolegomena*, p. 41/184.

Wölfflin accused the dominant positivism of art historical discourse for "seek[ing] only to ascertain the chronology of what has taken place", meaning the establishing of facts, dates and names.⁵³ For him "empirical data accumulation is not yet *Wissenschaft*".⁵⁴ This is a critical attitude towards the slogan of the 19th century Rankean approach to history, 'to simply describe how it actually was' (*wie es eigentlich gewesen ist*), the collection and examination of any kind of documentary evidence, in order to have a foundation of factual knowledge. The *wissenschaftliche* aspect of Wölfflin's approach -the empiricism of experience- stands in contrast to positivism's claim to the *Wissenschaftlichkeit* of facts and dates. Wölfflin states in the text that "one can work exactly [*wissenschaftlich*] only when it is possible to capture the stream of phenomena in fixed form".⁵⁵ The term 'fixed form' implies foundations (*Grundlagen*) and *Begriffe*, concepts, as operative notions. Systematic *Wissenschaft* is organised by conceptual conditions and structured reasoning ("articulatio"), rather than the stockpiling of factual data ("coacervatio").⁵⁶ Wölfflin insists that "psychology would also enable art history to trace individual events to general principles or laws".⁵⁷ Psychology is proposed as a *Hilfswissenschaft*, a field which contributes to the foundations of art history.

Wölfflin directly affirmed his historical project: "to trace individual events [or forms] to general principles or laws".⁵⁸

⁵³ *Prolegomena*, p. 41/184. "was nacheinander gekommen ist".

⁵⁴ Notebook 9 (1885), p. 107. "empirische Stoffanhäufung ist allerdings noch keine *Wissenschaft*".

⁵⁵ *Prolegomena*, p. 41/184.

⁵⁶ Cf. comment in notebook: "the whole is therefore articulated (articulation) and not accumulated (coacervatio), das Ganze ist also gegliedert (articulatio) und nicht angehäuft (coacervatio)" (Notebook 9 (1885), p. 108).

⁵⁷ *Prolegomena*, p. 41/184. "das einzelne auf ein allgemeines, auf Gesetze zurückzuführen".

⁵⁸ *Prolegomena*, p. 41/184.

Historiographically, this sentence outlines much of the textual work which follows the *Prolegomena*. By starting from specific works of art and architecture, Wölfflin wants to categorise fields of cultural production which form law-like characteristics of similarity and continuity, apart from their distinct and individual identity and particularity, such as the notions of 'style' and 'period', which is a dominant theme in his next book, *Renaissance and Baroque*.

The particular and the universal belong to a philosophical and metaphysical *Grundproblem*, basic problem, of any *Geschichtsphilosophie*, philosophy of history. It expresses the relation of our individual identity, something like Heidegger's *Dasein*, and, at the same time, the relation and belonging to the communal and cultural, what Wölfflin calls "*Volks- und Zeitcharakter* (the character of the nation and the time)"⁵⁹, a universal and (Heidegger's) ontic sphere of human beings. For Wölfflin the subject is always part of the universal dimension of existence, although he emphasises particular degrees of intensities within this common identity.

The historical change of cultural and artistic identities is a concern for Wölfflin's conception of *Kulturgeschichte*. Most historical studies, in the late 19th century, following historicism, diverge into either of two directions. On the one hand, specialisations and concentrated research created the diversification of specialised knowledge in a multitude of microcosms, and, on the other hand, the *universalgeschichtliche*, universal-historical, dimension also attracted scholars, with Spengler as prime (albeit negative) example, which attempted to capture a certain Hegelian, transcendental, meta- and world-historical conception of history as

macrocosm. Wölfflin attempted to occupy both directions in his texts. The *Prolegomena* develops a universal concept of the body as the instrument which explores different historical forms of architecture. His apparent dissolution of the tension between the continuity and discontinuity of the body is problematic. In this respect, Wölfflin's text is symptomatic of the condition of the discipline of art history which emerges as *Wissenschaft* and attempts to formulate concepts and methods to envelope and resolve the conflicting dimensions of art and of history.

The critique of art history has its origins not only in disciplinary contestations about *Wissenschaftlichkeit* but also in a notion of modernism which included a fundamental denial of the past and a focus on the present brought on by the immediacy and intensity of historicism. In the text's relation to Dilthey's philosophy of life, the emphasis is on the experience and reality of life and rooted in *erleben* and *verstehen*, experiencing and understanding. Wölfflin's historical perspective of embodied architecture depends on the mode of *Erlebnis* in which a dynamic, subjective sense of involvement and the present are projected into art historical thinking about the past. He commented in a notebook: "what our generation of small researchers is missing is the historical sense. ... [They have] no idea of evolution and historical becoming, no comprehension of the significance of spontaneity and receptivity".⁶⁰ Wölfflin implicates the subject in historical inquiries, as responding and being connected to the past. He emphasises the living aspect

⁵⁹ *Prolegomena*, p. 42/184.

⁶⁰ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 9. "Was unsrem Geschlecht der kleinen Forscher fehlt ist der historische Sinn. ... Keine Idee von Entwicklung und histor.[ischem] Werden, kein Verständnis für die Bedeutung von Spontaneität und Rezeptivität".

and presence of culture, of art and architecture, in opposition to the factual knowledge of dates and names belonging to the past. In view of this dimension of interpretation proposed by Wölfflin, he belittled traditional scholarship: "how dilettante does the hitherto historical examination and contemplation appear".⁶¹ For Wölfflin, historical inquiries of the past are always done for the present. He noted that "the history of art has to ... show and teach one's own artistic conception of reality, the spirit of different times".⁶² He argues why this approach is *wissenschaftlich* and anthropologically relevant to an historian of culture. The involvement of the subject is necessary in order to gain insight into the experience of the past. The *Prolegomena* can be interpreted as a theoretical project located within a philosophical exploration of psychological aspects of the subject's perception and reception of architecture.

An evaluation of Wölfflin's dissertation needs to emphasise the conceptual capacity of the text in regard to the theories of his later publications. The significance and the relevance of Wölfflin's approach lie in the positioning of the subject as a mechanism and agent that invests the historical interpretation of art and architectural objects with a subjective sense and therefore varied meaning. The viewer, the subject who experiences an aesthetic object, creates a 'perspectival' view of the history of the object from the standpoint of the subject's own present. Readers of Wölfflin's texts experience in their embodied imagination the form of the objects via the specifically anthropomorphic and subject-driven language of the

⁶¹ Notebook 9 (1885), p. 68. "wie dilettantisch erscheint dann die bisherige Geschichtsbetrachtung".

⁶² Notebook 9 (1885), p. 55. "die Kunstgeschichte muss ... zur eignen künstlerischen Auffassung der Wirklichkeit im Geiste verschiedener Zeiten anleiten".

descriptions. The revolutionary aspect of Wölfflin's theory is the inclusion of the psychological and physiological experience of the subject in the historical understanding of art and architectural culture.⁶³ The historicity of the past is accepted and, indeed, dependent on the historicity of the present.⁶⁴ The writing of history is part of a continuous process of re-writing and revising the past, for it to make sense in the present.

To conclude, the *Prolegomena* is an investigation into the formulation and the conditions for historical interpretations of architecture. Wölfflin utilises philosophical (Kant, Dilthey, Schopenhauer and Hegel) and psychological (empathy theory) concepts to determine his architectural theory as a *wissenschaftliche* dimension within art history. He proposes a conception of an embodied architecture, in which the human body corresponds not to an anthropocentric essence but to an anthropomorphic form and tool of knowledge which correlates the physical and psychological bodiliness of subject and object. Embodied architecture is based on such an anthropomorphical theory of knowledge. In this assumption of bodiliness, architectural form is the expression of an inherent will and of internal psychological states. Such psychological conditions can be bodily inferred when the physical experience and perception of the architectural object is processed by the subject.

⁶³ This 'subjective' aspect of Wölfflin's historical analysis can be seen in direct opposition to the 'objective' aspirations and intentions of positivist scholarship, for instance.

⁶⁴ In comparison, the art historical methodology of the Viennese School of iconography and iconology, with its focus on the identification of themes in texts from the past (texts contemporary or relevant to the works of art and architecture to be analysed), does not consider the present of the historian, nor his/her experience of the artefacts as pertinent. Retrospectively, Wölfflin's criticality and emphasis on the subject become even more apparent.

Wölfflin stresses the bodily impact of the activity of reception when forms are perceived and conceptualised by the subject. He thereby proposes essentially, though never labels it as such, an aesthetics of reception, a *Rezeptionsästhetik*. The *Prolegomena* is Wölfflin's 'philosophical psychology project' within his scheme of creating a *menschliche Kulturgeschichte*, it is the architectural search for (self-) knowledge of the subject. The text together with the archival material demonstrate Wölfflin's principal concern with the subject in his attention to the theoretical and historical spheres of culture.

This evaluation of Wölfflin's ideas does not attempt to show that he was wrong, but to illustrate where the text and its issues encounter inherent problems. This relates to one of the main arguments of this thesis: namely that Wölfflin's texts exemplify symptomatically a tension within the discipline of art history. The intellectual discourse of German art history struggles to couple Kant's ideas of art with Hegel's ideas of history. Wölfflin proposed the body as a categorical interface between these two spheres. The body was Wölfflin's answer to the wish to concretise and to historicise (Hegel), the issues of aesthetic experience and of subjectivity (Kant). Bodiliness hinges the subject and the object together in terms of form, will and expression. This is a problem for both the theory and the history of architecture. The language of the text has not progressed enough to position the ideas within an anatomically neurological understanding; the discourse of neuro-psychology is missing. This makes some of Wölfflin's statements now seem naive and simplistic. Moreover, the text exhibits the limitations of empathy theory in respect to a more complex theory of psychological

identification. The text has intellectual limits. The entire theory hinges on his account of the body. But the multiplicity of the implied notions of the body (as ontological form, epistemology of the subject, architectural object, historicity and universality, continuity and discontinuity) creates conflicts. The Prolegomena will always be enigmatic because the issue of the body is set out in a preliminary way and with too many associations and connections. The problems and conflicts of the text are emblematic within the emergence of the discipline of art history out of a disciplinary conundrum, which was based in philosophy. Wölfflin's thinking can be located in the middle of a process of the crystallisation of different fields into individual disciplines. This situation was constituted by the separation of psychology and philosophy, psychology and aesthetics, history and philosophy.

While Wölfflin does not pursue any philosophical theories as such in his next text, Renaissance and Baroque, some traces are clearly there in the subject-driven, anthropomorphic language of the descriptions of architectural effects. The Prolegomena provides the programme and the theoretical infrastructure, so-to-speak, for Wölfflin's further publications. In his doctoral dissertation, he develops his art historical thinking which is based fundamentally on the subject. This 'philosophical psychology project' opens up and suggests answers to a certain extent about the constitution of the spatiality of the human subject and the experience of architectural effects. The text Renaissance and Baroque is an architectural study of the spatial subject in regard to a particular historical framework and location, Rome in the 16th century.

chapter two

Renaissance und Barock.
Eine Untersuchung über Wesen und
Entstehung
des Barockstils in Italien
1888

Renaissance and Baroque.
Investigation into the Nature and Emergence
of the Baroque Style in Italy

history as Wissenschaft

part one
THEMES & IMPLICATIONS
the baroque vs. the renaissance

part two
INVOLVED DISCOURSES
the historicity of bodiliness

Renaissance and Baroque is a classic text of art history.¹ While it has been surpassed by research and studies on Baroque architecture, it is still quoted and is part of the debates and arguments² about the definitions of the terms 'Renaissance' and 'Baroque'. And although postmodern theory usually evades and contests the validity of this kind of labelling, most University departments of art history still continue to be organised according to these categories.³ In this respect, Wölfflin's text seems to contain relevant yet, at the same time, problematic elements. The following analysis of the significant themes of the 1888 text attempts to deconstruct primarily the theoretical nature of the historical issues which Wölfflin explored. This interpretation of Renaissance and Baroque seeks to explain ambiguities and problems which, I want to argue, can be regarded as emblematic within the discipline of art history.

In part one of this chapter, the various themes and implications of the text are presented in terms of the encounter of 'the Baroque vs. the Renaissance'. The relation between Burckhardt and Wölfflin sets up the significance of Burckhardt's influence on

¹ All page references in this thesis refer firstly to the 3rd German edition of 1908, and secondly to the English edition of 1964.

² As I witnessed personally at a conference at the University of York, entitled 'Rethinking the Baroque', in July 2006.

³ At most Universities, the art history departments structure their courses by employing lecturers specialising in the following dominant periods (of Western art): Antiquity, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Baroque, Neoclassicism, the 19th and the 20th century. I was surprised to find the new field of 'Early Modern Studies' replacing the category of 'Baroque' in the curriculum of the University of York, which generated the 'Centre for Renaissance & Early Modern Studies'. However, this new label incorporates similar complications and problems of naming and definition than the term 'Baroque', albeit now pertaining to the other direction, the succeeding era

Wölfflin's concepts and theories. Wölfflin's themes are elaborations and responses to Burckhardt. An analysis of Wölfflin's language manifests a prevalence of the characterisations of the Baroque, establishing my argument about the emancipation of the Baroque, also outlined in the subtitle of the text⁴. With the methodology of comparison Wölfflin defines the architectural effects of the Baroque in relation to their Renaissance counterparts. The terminology of the architectural descriptions indicates the clear intention to emancipate the Baroque from being a mere phase of the Renaissance to having an equal status as historical totality. The dichotomy of the language delineates not only the Baroque but also the Renaissance, presenting an apparently diacritical relationship⁵. But, on the other hand, the category of the Baroque is constructed and depends conceptually on its juxtaposition with the Renaissance, which involves a categorical binary asymmetry, and not a diacritical equality. The categories are not at par. The category of the Renaissance is generally defined differently than the category of the Baroque⁶, although Wölfflin presents them as *if* they can be diacritically constructed, that is, in terms of their contrasting architectural effects. This issue presents a problematic split between the intention and the formulation of the text.

Wölfflin's language portrays stylistic changes in the architectural effects in terms of a development: as the emergence of the Baroque from the Renaissance, incorporating elements of

of the 'Modern period' (while 'Baroque' involves the retrospective perspective towards the Renaissance in the labelling process).

⁴ 'Investigation into the Nature and Emergence of the Baroque Style in Italy'.

⁵ Which would mean that the categories of the Baroque and the Renaissance define each other reciprocally.

continuity and discontinuity. In this respect, Wölfflin focuses on the chronological relation or historical succession of the two styles. The characterisation of the Baroque as equal, opposite and as a development from the Renaissance manifests an apparent contradiction in Wölfflin's thinking. The inconsistencies demonstrate Wölfflin's concern for theoretical and historical dimensions. The 1888 text is, as the 1886 doctoral dissertation before, neither an exercise of theory, nor history per se. In this interpretation, therefore, the conceptual condition of the text to exist in between and to attempt to connect theoretical and historical issues is of main interest.

This conceptual demarcation is of pivotal importance to the field of art history, at a time when the discipline was striving to establish itself as a *wissenschaftliche* and academic domain. The emergent discipline was developing its themes and approaches in this regard. The resulting promulgation and emanation of diverse and, indeed, contrasting, ideas about the theoretical and the historical aspects of art history are part and parcel of this endeavour. Wölfflin's apparent muddled and confused combination of theory and history is symptomatic for this intellectual territory and belongs to the elementary discourse and nature of art history.

In part two of this chapter, a rendering of the pivotal idea of 'the historicity of bodiliness' demarcates the various involved discourses. Reaching back to Wölfflin's doctoral dissertation, the architectural context couples the subject and the object in terms of bodiliness and spatiality. The text *Renaissance and Baroque* relates

⁶ The Renaissance is usually considered as a *cultural* period, while the Baroque is defined as an *aesthetic* period, for instance. Cf. Schapiro (1953), p. 113 (of 1970

to the Prolegomena in the presentation of a particular architectural theory: architecture as the experience of the effects of form on the subject, that is, as embodied space. The language of bodiliness reflects arguments of the 'aesthetics of perception and reception' that Wölfflin developed in his doctoral thesis. The corporeality of subject and object predicates the historicity of bodiliness. The body is an historical paradigm for architecture.

Similar to the Prolegomena and in accordance with references from the archival material, the 1888 text encapsulates a prevalent concern for the subject, the *Mensch*. In this *kulturhistorische* anthropology the theoretical dimension of bodiliness is fundamentally linked and entangled with the structure, categorisation and the writing of history. The dominant underlying theme of bodiliness is the membrane which connects the theoretical to the historical territory. In the concern for the subject, the various notions of the body⁷ make an exploration of theoretical implications necessary. The theoretical matters accommodate both Wölfflin's historical thinking (philosophy of history) and his history-writing (the particular account of 16th century architecture in Rome).

Various theoretical strings in this discourse of history bring the *wissenschaftliche* context of Renaissance and Baroque to the fore. Quotes from Wölfflin's notebooks explain that the 1888 text was intended to be a demonstration of 'history as *Wissenschaft*'. Notions of 'system' and 'development' are explored in terms of both their theoretical and historical aspects within Wölfflin's interpretation of architectural effects. The concept of *Wissenschaft* is an underlying

publication).

⁷ Which have been analysed and discussed in the previous chapter.

and substantial concern for Wölfflin, which was developed more explicitly in the archival material of the notebooks. The *Wissenschaftlichkeit* Wölfflin wants his texts to exemplify, constituted the co-ordination and integration of history with theory.

Within the art historical discourse, the multiple implications of the category of style furthermore generate a field in which unity and discontinuity between the past and the present are structured and regimented. This theorisation of art history leads to an exploration of the intellectual context of the 19th century with a focus on Hegel's ideas of history. This chapter responds to the main task of the thesis of exhibiting problematic issues and complexities of Wölfflin's text which portray the tension between the integration of the concepts of art and of history. Wölfflin's intention to write 'history as *Wissenschaft*' provides both the guiding idea and, at the same time, the central problem of the text.

The most prominent concepts and theories which Wölfflin explored in *Renaissance and Baroque* continued to be relevant themes in the 1915 text, *Principles of Art History*, albeit with programmatic changes. To conclude this chapter, a brief summary will outline points of continuity and areas of extension and development setting the scene for the interpretation of Wölfflin's most celebrated and most criticised book of 1915.

the baroque vs. the renaissance

BURCKHARDT

Jacob Burckhardt¹ (1818-1897) was the most significant influence on Wölfflin; Wölfflin said so himself in his autobiography². The references to Burckhardt's concepts are pivotal for this analysis, in order to trace how Wölfflin developed his own theories. Part of Wölfflin's conflicting notions in this chapter stem from the impact of Burckhardt's ideas and Wölfflin's particular appropriation and transformation of them.

Burckhardt was a specialist of the Italian Renaissance and he provided Wölfflin with a historical field of investigation: the eras of the Renaissance and the Baroque.³ Wölfflin's association with his teacher Burckhardt and research into the field which made Burckhardt a well-known scholar, set up a certain status for Wölfflin. Because of his relation to Burckhardt, Wölfflin took over the position as Burckhardt's successor at the University of Basle in 1893 when Burckhardt retired.⁴ Wölfflin taught in the intellectual sphere of

¹ Note that in the presentation of Burckhardt, my aim is not to present a historiographical discussion or critique of Burckhardt himself, but only to emphasise his significance and relevance for Wölfflin. The characterisations and descriptions of Burckhardt which I portray are, therefore, necessarily simplified and contestable within a critical analysis of Burckhardt.

² Presented in the 'Introduction' chapter to this dissertation.

³ Because, of course, the Baroque was regarded as the final and declining phase of the Renaissance by Burckhardt.

⁴ Gantner (1948), p. 98 (of 1989 edition). Gantner (1960) also noted that "while Burckhardt was alive, Wölfflin declined all offers" to teach at other Universities (p. 85).

Burckhardt.⁵ This does not mean that Wölfflin simply followed Burckhardt's views, but rather that the older scholar's opinions and arguments provoked a powerful reaction in Wölfflin. Brown rightly regarded Burckhardt as "Wölfflin's unnamed antagonist".⁶ Burckhardt considered the Baroque as a phase of decline. Wölfflin argued in the 1888 text that the Renaissance and the Baroque were different styles but equally valid periods, meaningful in terms of their particular composition of architectural forms which produce different spatial effects.

Burckhardt conceived the Renaissance as a cultural unity. Wölfflin compared the Baroque to the Renaissance in order to model and frame the identity of the Baroque, in terms of its difference and opposition to the preceding style and period, and therefore also as such a totality. In the following paragraphs, some particular aspects of Burckhardt's influence and impact on Wölfflin, as factors for the 1888 text, are explored.

Burckhardt's "interpretation of the Renaissance won almost universal acceptance in the decades following 1860, and remained almost unchallenged for half a century".⁷ Ferguson in his appraisal of the Swiss historian stated that "our conception of the Renaissance is Jacob Burckhardt's creation", and -rather poetically- that "it still remains the classic conception around which the storms of revisionism rage with increasing violence".⁸ This means that

⁵ Wölfflin was particularly close to Burckhardt starting in 1893 when he took over Burckhardt's teaching position at the University of Basle until the latter's death in 1897, in terms of regular conversations and letters from travels.

⁶ Brown (1982), p. 395.

⁷ Ferguson (1948), p. ix.

⁸ Ferguson (1948), p. 179. Interestingly enough, in contemporary art historical discussions about the identity of the Baroque, it is Wölfflin who is still in the middle of

Burckhardt's arguments about the Renaissance were not just advocated by him alone, but that many scholars working in the fields of history and art history used his notions. Wölfflin's interpretation of academic texts as well as lectures by Burckhardt and others on the Renaissance was fundamentally shaped by Burckhardt's views. In the preface to the second edition of Renaissance and Baroque (1906) Wölfflin mentions Burckhardt's studies of architectural history as an influence for his text. Burckhardt and various of his texts are acknowledged repeatedly throughout the 1888 text.⁹

Burckhardt's own time is seen as providing the (unnamed) foil against which Burckhardt pictured the Renaissance. Ferguson described generally that Burckhardt's

contemporary civilisation, despite essential progress, suffered from serious ills and that in the growth of bourgeois materialism, industrial mechanisation, and democracy there were inherent dangers to the life of the spirit. It was from this combination of faith in modern progress with revulsion against certain of its attributes that men turned to the Renaissance as a cultural ideal. ... it was the nostalgic reconstruction of an age in which art had been an integral part of life...¹⁰

The historical investigations into the life of the past, and particularly of the Renaissance were, according to Ferguson, an escape for Burckhardt from the turbulent politics and fractured cultural condition of the historicism of his present, the 19th century. Burckhardt's texts conceive his own time as an unspoken antithesis to the Renaissance. He "became deeply disillusioned with

the debate and revisions of the concept of the Baroque, as I experienced first-hand on a recent conference, 'Rethinking the Baroque', at the University of York, England (July 2006).

⁹ Ren & Bar, p. 2/16, 11/-, 31/46, 32/-, 61/83, 67/-, 86/-, 96/-, 110/129. The missing page numbers in the English translation mean the references to Burckhardt were not included.

¹⁰ Ferguson (1948), p. 180; 181.

contemporary political trends", Farago observed.¹¹ His "praise for the Italian national spirit [during the Renaissance] ... is a 19th century humanist's critique of current politics".¹² To Burckhardt "the Renaissance appeared to be everything the Modern world was not".¹³ Wölfflin, who conceived the Baroque in opposition to the Renaissance, relates the 19th century explicitly to the Baroque, he writes: "one can hardly fail to recognise the affinity that our own age in particular bears to the Italian baroque".¹⁴ This conception is in line with Burckhardt's implied juxtaposition of the Renaissance with the 19th century.

Burckhardt's vision of the Renaissance was framed by the fact that he synthesised material which others had researched earlier into a totality and coherent unity. Burckhardt attempted to provide a systematically structured presentation (*systematisch gegliederte Darstellung*) of the paradigmatic constants of the culture of the epoch.¹⁵ He "characterised the Renaissance as a harmonic, eternally unchanging whole, whose pictures reveal the beauty and virtues of classical stasis"; "what matters [to Burckhardt] is the fixing and framing, in his own composition, of the timeless ideals of harmony and balance that gave birth to the unity of Renaissance culture".¹⁶ His most well-known text, *The Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy* (1860), set no specific beginning or end to the time of the Renaissance, nor did he narrate a 'story' of the Renaissance, nor did he consider it in terms of development. Holly

¹¹ Farago (1995), p. 68.

¹² Farago (1995), p. 70.

¹³ White (1975), p. 247.

¹⁴ Ren & Bar. p. 65/87; where Wölfflin also describes the similarity of affects between the Baroque and the music of Wagner.

¹⁵ Bruer (1998), p. 105; 116. My emphasis.

¹⁶ Holly (1994), p. 353f.

correctly identified that "for Burckhardt, the study of history demands arrested time; for his student Wölfflin, it would always be an inquiry into metamorphosis", change and development.¹⁷ Wölfflin's idea of history is divergent from, and, in a sense, a reaction against Burckhardt's. Indeed, in the 1888 text, the argument about the different spatial effects of architectural forms of the Renaissance and the Baroque uses the notion of the development from one to the other.

The essential elements of Burckhardt's view in The Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy (1860) are that an individualism emerged and that there was an implied difference between the Renaissance and the Middle Ages.¹⁸ Wölfflin utilises the notions of difference and discontinuity in the juxtaposition of the Baroque with the Renaissance. Friedrich argued that this opposition of the Baroque and the Renaissance by Wölfflin "was already implied in the work of Burckhardt, who used the baroque throughout his work for purposes of negative contrast".¹⁹ Burckhardt's general theme was the play of great personalities within the three fundamental structures of society: the state (politics), religion, and culture. But the aspects of the arts which Burckhardt analysed, the relation between works of art, artists and patrons, are not considered by Wölfflin in Renaissance and Baroque.²⁰ Wölfflin focuses on works as forms and effects on the

¹⁷ Holly (1994), p. 353.

¹⁸ Ferguson (1948), p. 214.

¹⁹ Friedrich (1955), p. 144.

²⁰ In Wölfflin's 1899 text, Classic Art, however, he presented a discussion of individual artists his first part, while the second part outlined the characteristics of High Renaissance art.

subject. The idea of a history of form, however, stems from Burckhardt.²¹

Wölfflin attempted to explain the difference and emergence of the forms of the Baroque from the (high) Renaissance during the 16th century in Rome in his text, while in the Cicerone (1855), Burckhardt had presented the art and architecture of Italy from antiquity to the 18th century,

as one gradual **rise**, to the condition of excellence represented by the High Renaissance, and the *subsequent fall or dissolution* of the harmony and balance achieved there ... the *terminal periods* [i.e. the Baroque], however, are characterised in pathetic more than in tragic terms. The time or mood of the concluding passages of the three parts [architecture, sculpture, painting which were discussed separately] is elegiac melancholy.²²

The scope and the program of the two historians are very different. Burckhardt concentrated on architecture in The Architecture of the Renaissance in Italy (1867), which described the period from the 11th to the 16th century²³ as a progression towards the Renaissance, in a wide analysis of various artistic centres in Italy (Florence, Rome, Venice, etc.). Wölfflin also explored architecture, but in a more defined area of research: the development and emergence of the Baroque in Rome during the 16th century. Burckhardt presented the emergence of the Renaissance as a growth in sophistication and skill of the architects, and the Baroque as a degenerate aftermath. By contrast, Wölfflin portrayed an opposition between the Renaissance and the Baroque in order to portray the later period as a different but equally valid art historical style and period. Walter Benjamin commented that Wölfflin was "the first to understand the Baroque in

²¹ Burckhardt pondered the idea of art history as the history of form in two letters (to Zahn 1869, to Grüninger 1879), as both Hager (1944) and Gantner (1945, p. 8) have observed. This means Wölfflin directed his research according to Burckhardt and, thereby, realised Burckhardt's ideas.

²² White (1975), p. 252. My emphasis in bold.

a positive light, a period in which even Burckhardt could see only evidence of decline".²⁴

Burckhardt can be considered as the "archetypal cultural historian, a cultivator of an aesthetic historiography and exponent of the impressionistic style of historical representation"; he also "managed to convey the impression of one who simply let the facts 'speak for themselves' and kept the conceptual principles of his narrative almost completely buried in the texture of his works".²⁵ White is describing Burckhardt, but the same could be said of Wölfflin. Wölfflin's writings also give the impression of a description of what the art or architectural object looks and feels like. Burckhardt's implied aesthetic conception of history proposed aesthetic experience as being correlated to historical experience.²⁶ The effect (*Wirkung*) of a work of art on the subject was a major concern for Burckhardt.²⁷ Boehm commented that Burckhardt was "not interested in an accumulation of dates from the past, but in the *Freisetzung der Erfahrung*, the actualisation and release of experience, as a capacity and ability of art".²⁸ Heidrich regarded Burckhardt's *Cicerone* as a text in which the "description and analysis of the *Lebensgefühl* [the feeling for life] and the level of a culture at a particular time are immediately expressed".²⁹ The subtitle of the *Cicerone* states that the book is intended as 'instruction to enjoy [the experience of] the works of art of Italy', and indeed the text functioned as a travel guide. Wölfflin's *Renaissance*

²³ Burckhardt (1867), §1.

²⁴ Benjamin (1988), p. 89 footnote 22.

²⁵ White (1975), p. 140; 142.

²⁶ Boehm (2002), p. 179.

²⁷ Noll (1998), p. 14.

²⁸ Boehm (2002), p. 183.

²⁹ Heidrich (1917), p. 79.

and Baroque was written in dialogue with Burckhardt's Cicerone, as Hüttinger noted, with the difference that Wölfflin produced a positive image of the Baroque, in a *wissenschaftliche* systematic manner.³⁰ Wölfflin digested Burckhardt's attitudes and extended them by employing the psycho-physical field of *Einfühlung*, as a theory in the Prolegomena and then in Renaissance and Baroque. Wölfflin's physiological and psychological language seems to incorporate the personal experience and *Erlebnis* of the objects by the author.³¹ The terminology directs the architectural descriptions into a particular dimension, that of the bodiliness of the subject (the author and the reader) and the object throughout history. Wölfflin, like Burckhardt, camouflaged his theoretical foundation, and positioned it in the specificity of the descriptive language.³²

Wölfflin focused on the formal details of the architectural objects and the psychological expression of figural depictions in paintings and sculpture, to advance his understanding of the architectural forms. When Burckhardt did comment on formal aspects of the Renaissance, for example when discussing the ideals of the Renaissance, he noted the "absolute unity and symmetry", the "consummate distribution and articulation of space", the "harmonious development inside and out", and the "coherent

³⁰ Hüttinger (1967), p. 108f.

³¹ Note that Wölfflin spent the Winter of 1886/87 in Rome on a scholarship at the German Archaeological Institute, where he researched the architecture of the Baroque extensively.

³² Unusually, in Renaissance and Baroque Wölfflin briefly mentions the theoretical foundation of his approach to architecture, the concept of bodiliness: "We judge every object by analogy with our own bodies (*jeden Gegenstand beurteilen wir nach Analogien unseres Körpers*)", p. 56/77. The reference to the theoretical foundation of his theory of architecture, as developed in the Prolegomena, may be explained by the very short time of only two years between these texts. In later texts, there are no references to the philosophical underpinnings of bodiliness as substantiated in the Prolegomena.

elevations"³³, describing rather abstract aesthetic notions. Wölfflin amalgamated these attributes in his text but gave them an anthropomorphic emphasis with his subject-driven language. For Burckhardt, the high Renaissance was the "good" architecture. This is a value judgement which Wölfflin also used, when he described the Renaissance as the "good style" in the 1888 text.³⁴ Wölfflin incorporated directly various other elements from Burckhardt, for example, the latter's Baroque characteristics of "*Verhältnisse im grossen* (relations in the large)"³⁵, "monumental buildings"³⁶, and "large dimensions"³⁷, which are echoed in Wölfflin's 'grand style' and 'massiveness'. Burckhardt noted in the 16th century an "increasing [of the] width and height of buildings", amounting in palace architecture to a "self-contained *grandezza*".³⁸ Wölfflin employed a parallel characterisation: his 'grand style' describes the growth in the size of structures³⁹ and the heightened impact of massiveness⁴⁰ in the Baroque, compared to the Renaissance. Burckhardt's account of "Michelangelo's demonical form treatment"⁴¹ is also mentioned by Wölfflin in the text⁴² with a reference to Burckhardt's *Cicerone*⁴³. Burckhardt's notion of "*das Strebende* (the ascending or striving)"⁴⁴ has been extended by Wölfflin into a "sweeping pathos" and a "wildly rearing upwards"⁴⁵. For Burckhardt, the Baroque style of the 16th century was "free form ... which was able to transform,

³³ Burckhardt (1867), p. 81 (of 1985 English edition).

³⁴ *Ren & Bar*, p. 64/86.

³⁵ Burckhardt (1855), p. 283 (of 1939 edition).

³⁶ Burckhardt (1855), p. 284 (of 1939 edition).

³⁷ Burckhardt (1855), p. 297 (of 1939 edition).

³⁸ Burckhardt (1867), p. 157 (of 1985 English edition).

³⁹ *Ren & Bar*, p. 22ff/38ff.

⁴⁰ *Ren & Bar*, p. 28ff/44ff.

⁴¹ Burckhardt (1855), p. 310 (of 1939 edition).

⁴² *Ren & Bar*, p. 60f.

⁴³ *Ren & Bar*, p. 61, footnote 1) refers to *Cicerone*, II, 2., p. 546.

⁴⁴ Burckhardt (1855), p. 312 (of 1939 edition).

fantastically and capriciously".⁴⁶ Similarly, Wölfflin describes the "tendency to formlessness" of the Baroque.⁴⁷

The Renaissance was a cultural entity for Burckhardt and not a style per se. Within art historical discourse, however, Burckhardt's concept has turned into a notion of a period and a style. Ferguson mentioned that "it was Burckhardt who first established the Renaissance firmly as an *epoch* in the history of civilisation".⁴⁸ Following Burckhardt's conception of the Renaissance to a degree, Wölfflin attempts to outline the identity of architectural forms in the emergent cultural epoch of the Baroque. But, Burckhardt's understanding of the Renaissance and classicism was different from Wölfflin's. Burckhardt was convinced that the Renaissance and antique classicism were superior forms of art, while Wölfflin's main argument in his text is about the rehabilitation and emancipation of the Baroque, so that the Renaissance and the Baroque are seen as different but equally valid art historical styles and periods.

Burckhardt conceived *Kulturgeschichte* as the history of civilisation, as the title of his 1860 book, *The Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy*, suggests, which meant "defining the attitude of men of a certain epoch as they confront the world"⁴⁹. The great masterpieces of art of the Renaissance were read by Burckhardt "as historical documents, symptomatic of 15th century cultural and social attitudes".⁵⁰ Burckhardt considered the arts as reflection of the identity of a culture. Similarly, Wölfflin explored in the 1888 text the

⁴⁵ *Ren & Bar*, p. 59/80. "schwungvoll-pathetisch", "wildes Sichaufbäumen".

⁴⁶ Burckhardt (1867), p. 157 (of 1985 English edition).

⁴⁷ *Ren & Bar*, p. 30/45. "Tendenz zum Formlosen" translated as "tendency to amorphousness".

⁴⁸ Ferguson (1948), p. 390. My emphasis.

⁴⁹ Klein (1979), p. 27.

⁵⁰ Holly (1994), p. 352.

spatial effects of architectural forms in order to infer the bodily mood, the physical conditions and the cultural ideals of corporeality of the people. Burckhardt distinguished the arena of *Kulturgeschichte* from political history not by establishing sequences of events, but rather, as Ferguson argued, by "devoting his research to discover the mentality of the people and the spirit of the age"; "and all of Burckhardt's thought was based on the tacit assumption that there was a peculiar mentality, character, or spirit, a *Volksgeist*, common to the whole nation in a given age", a *Zeitgeist*.⁵¹ With regard to this Hegelian concept, Ferguson commented on Burckhardt's general attitude towards Hegel:

though undoubtedly influenced by Hegel[*'s concept of the Zeitgeist*], perhaps more than he knew [and wanted or was prepared to recognise and admit], he was repelled by Hegel's abstract rationalisation of world history, not only because he disliked its teleological end, but because it was a chronological construction which at no point paused long enough to give a concrete picture of the human scene. ... Burckhardt's perception of the inner spirit of a civilisation, which was at once the chief aim of his research and his sole guide to the selection and evaluation of sources, was based on nothing more than his own intuition and his undoubted familiarity with the literature of his chosen fields.⁵²

Gombrich argued that "what Burckhardt initiated in historiography is 'a succession of attempts to salvage the Hegelian assumption without accepting Hegelian metaphysics'"⁵³. Wölfflin was also part of this attempt. He inherited the concern for the mentality and the *Zeit-* and *Volksgeist* from Burckhardt. But Wölfflin "reacted against the personal, unverifiable cultural analysis of Jacob Burckhardt"⁵⁴, by focusing on the more concrete realisation of bodiliness in architectural effects. His goal was to understand the psychological field of the identity and mood of a culture at a certain time, to

⁵¹ Ferguson (1948), p. 187.

⁵² Ferguson (1948), p. 185f; 188.

⁵³ Kerrigan and Braden (1989), p. 4.

capture the *Zeitgeist* as it was expressed in the forms of art and architecture. He writes in the 1888 text: "the architectural style is an expression of the time"⁵⁵, and "not the individual products are relevant but the more general, the basic mood of the time which creates these products"⁵⁶. Wölfflin further specifies that "architecture is an expression of the time **in so far as** it depicts the bodily *Dasein* of the people... it expresses the *Lebensgefühl* of an epoch"⁵⁷. This is a crucial specification; Wölfflin limits his notion of the *Zeitgeist* to the historically situated bodiliness of subject and object. The effects of architecture create a consciousness and identity of the body and the self. Because the body is, at the same time, a constant, the historian can gather information about the *Formgefühl*, the feeling of form, of a culture through the differential corporeal experience of architectural objects.

Ferguson, however, regarded Wölfflin's study of the Baroque and the Renaissance as a study of pure form, and Wölfflin's attempts to relate this to contemporary psychological conditions as "hav[ing] little bearing upon [the] interpretation of the culture of the age" [as exemplified by Burckhardt] because he was so "exclusively interested in form".⁵⁸ He criticised Wölfflin for "limit[ing] the Renaissance to a style concept, confined within a chronologically narrowed period, or to depreciate it in other ways, generally to the advantage of the Baroque".⁵⁹ For Ferguson to have missed the

⁵⁴ Cheetham (1998), p. 48.

⁵⁵ *Ren & Bar*, p. 55/76. "den architektonischen Stil als Ausdruck seiner Zeit".

⁵⁶ *Ren & Bar*, p. 56/77. "Nicht auf die einzelnen Produkte, sondern auf das Allgemeine kommt es an, auf die Grundstimmung der Zeit, die diese Produkte hervorbringt".

⁵⁷ *Ren & Bar*, p. 57/78. "Sie [die Architektur] ist Ausdruck einer Zeit, **insofern** sie das körperliche Dasein der Menschen ... das Lebensgefühl einer Epoche ... zur Erscheinung bringt". My emphasis in bold.

⁵⁸ Ferguson (1948), p. 250.

⁵⁹ Ferguson (1948), p. 250. My emphasis.

kulturgeschichtliche dimension of Wölfflin's anthropology is perhaps forgivable, for this aspect only becomes clear when Wölfflin's texts are put in relation with the archival material. But Ferguson should be criticised for his complaint about Wölfflin's transformation and metamorphosis of the Renaissance from a *Kulturbegriff*, concept of culture, to merely a *Stilbegriff*, concept of style, or a *Kunstbegriff*, concept of art, as a result of Wölfflin's text(s). The Renaissance had already been considered in stylistic terms in the architectural style debate of the 1830s/1840s in Germany, for instance, and specifically in Johann Heinrich Wolff's text, 'Remarks on the Architectural Questions broached by Professor Stier at the Meeting of Architects in Bamberg'⁶⁰ (1845), where Wolff wrote "this led in the 16th century to the so-called Renaissance style"⁶¹.

Burckhardt's influence on Wölfflin is pivotal for an understanding of the 1888 text. Burckhardt's account of the Renaissance is one of the conditions which formed Wölfflin's thinking in *Renaissance and Baroque*. It was Burckhardt's description of the Baroque, which Wölfflin wanted to develop, to emancipate the Baroque from the Renaissance, from the status of a mere conclusion and degenerate phase of the Renaissance, and to present the Baroque as equally valid entity. Burckhardt constructed the paradigmatic image of a cultural totality with regard to the Renaissance; Wölfflin attempts to do the same for the Baroque. Besides Burckhardt's impact, another crucial factor of the text is the language with which the architectural objects are described.

⁶⁰ English translation of this essay published in: *In What Style Should We Build? The German Debate on Architectural Style* edited and translated by Wolfgang Herrmann, 1992.

⁶¹ Herrmann (1992), p. 143.

The 1888 text is governed by Wölfflin's conception of the body as advanced in his doctoral dissertation. The implications of bodiliness and corporeality in the descriptions of architectural structures, elements and details create a complexity which hinges the identity of buildings on the experience of them. In a notebook, he wrote that "the description is the explanation".⁶² The physicality of the terminology implies the type of empirical evidence with which Wölfflin traces the *Zeitgeist* and the bodily mood of the past. A present aesthetic experience constructs the framework for the bodily attitude of the past. The ambiguity of the various involved subjects - people in the 16th century, Wölfflin the historian and the author, as well as the reader- exemplifies Wölfflin's symptomatic if impossible attempt to fuse the ideas of Kant (experience in the present) and Hegel (historicity of objects and subjects).

Wölfflin's narrative of art history presents an historical account of being, of the experience and the body of the subject. In this sense, Wölfflin explores a highly particularised field of the Baroque: it is architecture constituted through the perception and the reception by the subject.⁶³ Architectural objects and details are described in terms of their effects upon the subject. In the 1888 text, Wölfflin explicitly included the subject in his descriptions, when he writes "one does not feel released but..."⁶⁴, "one begins to sense the

⁶² Notebook 38 (1901-1903), p. 115. "*Die Beschreibung ist die Erklärung*".

⁶³ This is a fact usually forgotten or repressed by critics. For them Wölfflin wrote about the Baroque and the Renaissance in general terms, which he simply did not do in the 1888 text.

⁶⁴ *Ren & Bar*, p. 23/38. "*Man fühlt sich nicht erlöst, sondern...*". Translated as: "It does not convey a state of present happiness, but a feeling of..."

dissolution..."⁶⁵, and "one no longer experiences this as lifting itself up but as sinking down"⁶⁶. The German pronoun 'man', 'one', is an unmarked nominative implying multiple subjects: the 16th century person, the author, the historian, the reader. The language suggests that Wölfflin describes not only the experience of the architectural object by the subject but also the implied experience of the architectural form, as if the object was a subject. The corporeality of architecture triggers and shapes the way objects and forms are characterised.

All descriptions are predicated upon this subject-driven language of bodily movement, physical and mental activities, processes and conditions, using mostly adjectives and verbs. The architectural descriptions in the text imply an event and an *Erlebnis*, lived experience. The language is psychological in the sense that its terms imply perception, bodily processes and the identity of a subject. This also involves presenting the object as an architectural 'subject': the architectural object is anthropomorphised and suggests an expression of a will. Wölfflin wrote in his notebook: "the art of the formless [i.e. of the Baroque] is the art of desperation (*Verzweiflung*). Joy through intended irregularity, because no limits, boundaries are found".⁶⁷ In this notebook entry, the irregularity of Baroque forms seems to be the expression of a will which feels

⁶⁵ *Ren & Bar*, p. 26/40. "Man beginnt die Auflösung der Fassade in einzelne gleichwertige Stockwerke als unendlich zu empfinden". In the translation: "Facades consisting of a series of equal storeys became unacceptable", the indefinite pronoun 'man', 'one' has been eliminated, leading to a less immediate indication of the subject in the statement.

⁶⁶ *Ren & Bar*, p. 29/44. "Man empfindet ihn nicht mehr als sich hebend, sondern als herabsinkend". Translated as: "A shallow pediment gives a sinking rather than a rising effect,...". Again, the indefinite pronoun has been deleted which makes more sense for the English text structure of the translation, however, the inclusion of a notion of the subject prevalent in Wölfflin's phrasing is thereby also eradicated, unfortunately.

⁶⁷ Notebook 12 (1885/86), p. 12 v.

desperation and joy. The language suggests that the architectural object is feeling these sensations. The ambiguity of the projective and introjective terminology of the descriptions implies the human subject who experiences these architectural forms. The implications of various subjects predicate an inter-subjective rapport and understanding in which the language works as a theory within this conception of architecture, to capture and define architecture in bodily terms, to give life to the architectural object. The language describes the architectural objects as if they were living things with feelings, thoughts and sensations. Architecture is therefore not only conceived in terms of effects and experiences by the subject, but also as if the architectural structure itself is experiencing and expressing its bodiliness. The indeterminate and multivalent terminology exhibits the attempt to co-ordinate the experience of the subject with the historical dimension of the object.

Wölfflin's terminology portrays the attitude of an author, who describes his own experiences of the architectural effects, without referring to himself. The text is not a first-person narrative. But the subject is fundamentally *implicated* and *included* in this text about architecture. And with this, the subject's bodiliness constitutes architecture as corporeality and spatiality. Wölfflin employed this architectural theory which is based on the aesthetics of perception, reception and of the subject, in his exploration of architectural history, as a method to portray architectural forms from the past as accessible and relevant for the present.

Three of Wölfflin's four characteristics of the Baroque⁶⁸ indicate this language of bodiliness. The aspect of the 'grand style' relates to human size and scale. The impressions of size and scale refer directly to the effect of the architectural proportions on the human subject which recognises spatial objects in relation to its own image of the size and dimensions of its body. Baroque architecture appears as "colossal"⁶⁹, "immediate and overwhelming"⁷⁰ and "monumental"⁷¹, as perceived by the subject in comparison to the Renaissance.

Massiveness was interpreted as the effect of broad heaviness of block-like forms, as great mass⁷² conflicting to a degree with the other characteristic of the Baroque, movement, which was associated with the "dissolving of horizontals"⁷³, the "break up of forms"⁷⁴, the diversification and multiplication of elements, the moving outwards and upwards ("*Hochdrang*"⁷⁵), and a "tendency to formlessness"⁷⁶, which is precisely not the effect of massiveness. Massiveness, for Wölfflin, suggests an immense pressure which seems to crush the form.⁷⁷ And it seems that in "the giving way to the heaviness", the "form is actually *suffering* under the force of the load"⁷⁸. The language implies powerful experiences with which the reader unconsciously identifies.

⁶⁸ As outlined on the content page: part one, [ch. 1: the painterly style:] ch. 2: the grand style; ch. 3: massiveness; ch. 4: movement. *Ren & Bar*, p. VII/f/v.

⁶⁹ *Ren & Bar*, p. 24/39.

⁷⁰ *Ren & Bar*, p. 23/38.

⁷¹ *Ren & Bar*, p. 23/38. "*Komposition aufs Grosse*".

⁷² *Ren & Bar*, p. 28/44.

⁷³ *Ren & Bar*, p. 41/59.

⁷⁴ *Ren & Bar*, p. 41/59. "*Brechung der Formen*".

⁷⁵ *Ren & Bar*, p. 41/59.

⁷⁶ *Ren & Bar*, p. 30/45.

⁷⁷ *Ren & Bar*, p. 28/44.

⁷⁸ *Ren & Bar*, p. 29/45. "*Dieses Nachgeben gegen die Schwere führt bis zur Erscheinung, wo die Form unter der Gewalt der Last wirklich leidet*". My emphasis.

Movement in Baroque architecture consists of a "sense of direction".⁷⁹ Wölfflin describes the "rhythmic sequences" of windows⁸⁰, and the "oscillation of the entire wall mass"⁸¹ of facades and interiors, as, for instance, in "elliptical spatial articulations"⁸². Movement is also related to the tectonics of gravity and structure: the "holding up" and "supporting" is done "with violence and passionate effort"⁸³, which are actions, sentiments and states of mind of the human subject. The architectural objects appear agitated and moving, they appear to be acting subjects. "Complicated and intricate compositions lead to the incomprehensibility (*zum Unüberschaubaren*) of forms and motives".⁸⁴ The engagement of the subject, in terms of the comprehension or incomprehension, is directly exposed by the impact and effect of the forms. But again, the notion of the subject incorporates the author who attempts to describe and explain the architecture, the reader who is interested in the forms, the architectural object which apparently expresses the bodily conception of spatiality and corporeality in its form, and supposedly the 16th century subject who created the architecture. The many dimensions of this subjectivity exhibit Wölfflin's transformation and extension of Kant's 'transcendent subject' into one with a body; precisely because this body can be used as a mechanism to maintain a certain continuity with and access to the past.

The language Wölfflin employed in the 1888 text expresses his understanding of the body as an instrument to register the expression

⁷⁹ *Ren & Bar*, p. 41/58.

⁸⁰ *Ren & Bar*, p. 43/61.

⁸¹ *Ren & Bar*, p. 44/61. "*Schwingung der ganzen Mauermasse*".

⁸² *Ren & Bar*, p. 45/63. "*elliptische Raumgestaltung*".

⁸³ *Ren & Bar*, p. 41/58.

of forms. He alluded to the *Prolegomena*, when he wrote: "architecture ... is an expression of its time in so far as it reflects the corporeal *Dasein* of man, *des Menschen*, and his particular habits of deportment and movement".⁸⁵ The body is conceived as a manifestation of the "*Lebensgefühl*, the feeling for life, of an epoch", and of the idealised *Körpergefühl*, feeling of the body, of "what the people wanted to be".⁸⁶ Architecture is another body, another subject. This means that people express their ideas and ideals through the body, and that the shapes, postures and movements of the body are rendered in depictions and the fabrications of form, such as architecture. Wölfflin delineates the concept of the body by reference to depictions of the human figure and clothing in paintings.⁸⁷ In his summary of the bodily ideals of the Roman Baroque⁸⁸, the descriptive language refers indirectly to the architectural field, although he makes references to clothing and to flesh. This connection of architecture to the human figure is a methodological element, in order to fuse the expression of culture with the expression of the human soul (or subject), to infer agency⁸⁹. Wölfflin wrote: "the significance of reducing stylistic forms into terms of the *human body* is that it provides us with an immediate expression of the soul".⁹⁰ The language is comparative in that impressions of the subject are projected into the architectural objects. Baxandall described such a subject-driven language as

⁸⁴ *Ren & Bar*, p. 46/63f.

⁸⁵ *Ren & Bar*, p. 56/78.

⁸⁶ *Ren & Bar*, p. 57/78. "*was der Mensch sein möchte*", translated as man's aspirations.

⁸⁷ *Ren & Bar*, p. 57/78. Cf. his description of various ascension images by Titian, Correggio, and Agostino Caracci, p. 59/80f.

⁸⁸ *Ren & Bar*, p. 58/80.

⁸⁹ Summers (1989), p. 394.

⁹⁰ *Ren & Bar*, p. 58/80. Emphasis by Wölfflin. "*eines Seelischen*" translated as 'spiritual'.

"ego-words": "they involve the speaker [Wölfflin] in the activity of inferring and the hearer [the reader] in the activity of reconstructing and assessing the pattern of implication".⁹¹ The physicality of the reader is directly addressed and engaged by the anthropomorphic characterisations of the architectural objects. Wölfflin's language is convincing, and this rhetorical skill compels the reader to agree with the description, or at least to relate to the object in a corporeal sense. "Even after we as readers have ceased to be convinced, looking at [the] dated historical interpretations", Hamilton noted, "what we notice are the master-tropes employed, the strategies for persuading us that evidence is being used in the proper sense...", and with this "the justification for [Wölfflin's] interpretation is lodged in its expressions".⁹² The anthropomorphic terminology captivates the reader's own bodiliness throughout the text.

The historical understanding of architecture is related to the way figural depictions portray the human body, in painting and sculpture. To a certain degree, the three arts are joined, in as much as the depictions of human bodies (in painting and sculpture) provide insight into the psychological constitution and ideals of architectural bodiliness. In explaining a style, Wölfflin commented that one has "to verify that it speaks in harmony with the *other organs of the age*".⁹³ For Wölfflin, painting, sculpture and architecture are always tied together when the expression of the *Körpergefühl*, feeling for the body, is examined. This *Körpergefühl* is part of Wölfflin's conception of *menschliche* (human) culture, in

⁹¹ Baxandall (1979), p. 462.

⁹² Hamilton (1996), p. 21.

⁹³ *Ren & Bar*, p. 58/79. My emphasis. Wölfflin refers directly to poetry (p. 62/84) and to music (p. 65/87). In this regard, he also referred to the minor or decorative arts

which the subject's actions and bodily relations to life are mapped in their variety and differences across time. And since the human body is regarded as a constant, it allows a certain access to the past from the present.

Even Wölfflin's language for the wording of his topic, the Baroque, is particular. He often presented the Baroque as '*der Barock*', with a capital letter, as noun and in the nominative position in sentences. It acts as the subject of the sentence with an active and wilful mode of expression in the statement. This is characteristic of the original German text, whereas in the English translation it is occasionally diluted into the '*baroque*', or '*the baroque style*', that is, in its diminution into an adjective.⁹⁴ Perhaps the German phrases in the active tense were translated into the passive tense to limit the nominative, subject-like implications so overt in the original. Hermann Bauer suggested that "*the devaluation of a style is usually formulated with adjectives, while a positive appreciation of an epochal status [of a style] employs nouns*".⁹⁵ If so, it can be seen that Wölfflin's attitude is more affirmative towards the Baroque than the translator's, Kathrin Simon. The presentation of the later style as '*the Baroque*' indicates Wölfflin's intention to emancipate this field from its status as a declining phase of the Renaissance. In this regard, the notion of '*the Renaissance*' predicated the notion of '*the Baroque*'. The German text and its English translation posit divergent linguistic solutions to the status of the styles. It makes a bilingual

which included decoration, types of script/lettering, and clothing, in the *Prolegomena*, p. 42/185; 39/182.

⁹⁴ Cf. '*der Barock*' as '*baroque style*': p. 10/23; p. 54/75; p. 63/85.

⁹⁵ Bauer, H. (1992), p. 10f. My emphasis.

textual analysis complex. Readers of the English text should be aware of the dissimilar linguistic implications of the original German version.

To conclude this section on Wölfflin's language, I want to emphasise the argument that the terminology of his descriptions constitutes not a mere support, but the implementation and the theoretical framework for Wölfflin's particular theory of architecture. Renaissance and Baroque demonstrates Wölfflin's descriptive language of the perception and reception of the architectural object by the subject. The terminology of this subjective history and the historicised subject in turn facilitates the presentation of issues and themes in the conceptual and methodological mode of the comparison which sets up the Baroque against the Renaissance.

COMPARISON

In the 1888 text, Wölfflin compared the Baroque to the Renaissance. He wanted to present the categories of the Baroque and of the Renaissance as if they were opposites but also equals. But they are neither of those, they are asymmetrical. The conception of the Renaissance as a self-sufficient category, a cultural totality and stable unity derives from Burckhardt, and acts as the 'term of comparison' for the Baroque. But the Baroque is a mélange of particular architectural features and characteristics⁹⁶, and, more generally, an open-ended opposition in terms of being 'not-the-Renaissance'. Wölfflin's distinction of the Baroque from the Renaissance is a complex problem in the text.

In this analysis of the diverse mechanisms through which the comparison is made, a split between the intention and the formulation of the text will become apparent. The resulting ambiguity of Wölfflin's theories is itself a further symptom and example of the paradoxical condition out of which the German sphere of art history developed in the 19th century.

Wölfflin's method of comparing and opposing the Baroque with the Renaissance was used in order to emancipate and "rehabilitate"⁹⁷ the status of the Baroque, and to present it as equal to the Renaissance. A reference from his notebook, "wrong conception of the Baroque, as ruining the Renaissance"⁹⁸ indicates Wölfflin's disagreement with the traditional negative evaluation of the Baroque. The notebook statement shows that an adjustment and modification of the conception of the Baroque was a definite aspect of his thinking and his understanding of the issues. He presents at the beginning of his 1888 text the conventionally held *ex negativo* conception of the Baroque, as the "*Verwilderung und Willkür* (overgrowing and capriciousness)" and as the "*Auflösung und Entartung* (dissolution and degeneration)"⁹⁹ of the Renaissance. These statements are evidence for Wölfflin's privileging of the Renaissance (within the tradition of Burckhardt), but they indicate, in my view, more of a recognition of the general opinion than an expression of his own views.

⁹⁶ Cf. Painterliness, grand style, massiveness and movement.

⁹⁷ Locher (2001), p. 382.

⁹⁸ Notebook 12 (1886), p.62. My emphasis.

⁹⁹ *Ren & Bar*, p. 1/16.

Wölfflin differentiates the Baroque from the Renaissance in apparently diacritical terms in order to find distinct, yet related identities of the architectural effects of these styles. The Baroque and the Renaissance are each portrayed with positive and negative concepts. To characterise not only the Baroque in positive terms but also the Renaissance with negative connotations can be regarded as a rhetorical factor for an intentionally more balanced portrayal. Because Wölfflin wanted to increase the status of the Baroque, from mere phase of the Renaissance¹⁰⁰ to equal cultural entity and period following the Renaissance, he intended to construct a diacritical model of the two styles in which both define each other reciprocally. But, what he actually formulated was an opposition, in which, logically, there is given more value to the Renaissance. The Renaissance is necessary for this account of the Baroque, while a definition of the Renaissance is not dependent on its comparison or relation to the Baroque.¹⁰¹ The nature of the category of the Renaissance is different from the category of the Baroque. Wölfflin's characterisation of the Baroque as style is fundamentally dependent upon its distinction from and opposition to the Renaissance. This means that the opposition is generated by the rhetorical use of negation. At the same time, the Baroque is considered by Wölfflin equal to the Renaissance in terms of its status of an art historical

¹⁰⁰ A prevailing notion against which Wölfflin argued, but which remained and sustained the criticism of Wölfflin's ideas. Cf. Sedlmayr (1964), p. 14. "What did not become clear to Wölfflin ... was that he did not capture two styles, but merely two phases of one style". Sedlmayr's emphasis.

¹⁰¹ As Wölfflin himself exemplified with his 1899 text, *Classic Art*, in which the style of the Renaissance is predicated by tendencies and the developments from -what is today called- the Protorenaissance.

period. These two dimensions present a logical conflict and contradiction.¹⁰²

Wölfflin demarcates the style of the Baroque from the Renaissance by direct comparison, but, more concretely, by opposition. This opposition is linked in pairs of positive and negative descriptions. In the text, the Renaissance is portrayed in negative terms when the Baroque is described with positive notions, for example: "*unpainterly* are the uniform series and the regular interval [of the Renaissance]; a rhythmic succession [i.e. of the Baroque] is *better*, and *better* still is an apparently accidental grouping".¹⁰³ He writes, "what is grasped at first glance [due to clear order and representation, implying the Renaissance], can be *boring*; [the Baroque therefore] exhibits some parts as hidden, or covered ... the image becomes alive".¹⁰⁴ The Baroque exhibits "not something limited (*Begrenztes*) [as in the Renaissance], but the endlessness and infinity (*Unendliches*)".¹⁰⁵ Wölfflin describes the Renaissance as "what is regular is dead, without movement, *unpainterly*".¹⁰⁶

Wölfflin also presents the material the other way around - with a positive characterisation of the Renaissance connected to a negative one of the Baroque. He writes, "unlike the contour [of the Renaissance], which gives the eye a definite and easily comprehensible direction to follow, a [Baroque] mass tends to a movement of dispersal, leading the eye to and fro; it has no bounds, no definite break in continuity, and on all sides it increases and

¹⁰² The Baroque is the opposite to the Renaissance style, while it is also a similarly enclosed or unified cultural period.

¹⁰³ *Ren & Bar*, p. 18/32. My emphasis.

¹⁰⁴ *Ren & Bar*, p. 19/not found in the translation. My emphasis.

¹⁰⁵ *Ren & Bar*, p. 20/34.

¹⁰⁶ *Ren & Bar*, p. 18/32. "*alle Regel ist tot, ohne Bewegung, unmalerisch*".

decreases".¹⁰⁷ Other comparisons read: "instead of the closed and calm line [of the Renaissance], comes an uncertain sphere of stopping"¹⁰⁸ in the Baroque, and "the Baroque never offers us perfection and fulfilment, or the static calm of 'being' [of the Renaissance], only the unrest of change and the tension of transience".¹⁰⁹ He further characterises "the sacrificing"¹¹⁰ of the centrally-planned church [of the Renaissance] for the longitudinal one" of the Baroque.¹¹¹ In a notebook, Wölfflin also noted about the Baroque an "increase in size ... This size is a subdued, suppressed immensity, monstrosity (*gedämpftes Ungeheures*). Not the liberating beauty [of the Renaissance]; [the Baroque is an] intensification of life-force, pathological effect".¹¹²

These characterisations of the Baroque and the Renaissance are coupled into one sentence or into two paragraphs which both refer to the same aspects. Such dichotomous descriptions constitute a two-pole conception of the two styles. The important point here is that Wölfflin employed the positive - negative valuation in both directions. He does not solely affirm one style and negate the other. Each style is presented as if in direct and immediate competition and antagonism to the other style. The positive *and* negative descriptions of elements gradually create the conceptual space for both styles. Juxtaposition prompts a characterisation of the two styles which otherwise would not have been apparent.¹¹³ Wölfflin

¹⁰⁷ *Ren & Bar*, p. 17/31.

¹⁰⁸ *Ren & Bar*, p. 17/31. My translation. "*eine unbestimmte Sphäre des Aufhörens*".

¹⁰⁹ *Ren & Bar*, p. 45/62.

¹¹⁰ "*Opfern*", translated rather more neutrally as 'abandonment'.

¹¹¹ *Ren & Bar*, p. 46/63.

¹¹² Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 128f.

¹¹³ Bauer, H. (1976), p. 104.

intended to compare the Baroque against the Renaissance in order to emphasise their equal status as periods.

Although the forms, compositions and effects of the architecture are different between the Baroque and the Renaissance, as periods they are similar in status, due to their apparent diacritical relationship. The opposite of a description of the Renaissance indicates the Baroque. Having described the Renaissance with reference to Winckelmann's notions of classicism, Wölfflin writes, "one takes the opposite of these concepts and one has captured the nature, the substance of the new art"¹¹⁴; and the opposite of Baroque effects accounts for the Renaissance treatment of forms.¹¹⁵

Wölfflin's positive and negative descriptions can be related to a tradition of argument and intellectual debate based on a 'pro and contra' pattern. A mode of opposites pervades Western rhetoric and intellectual discourse, in which diverse problems are manifested as dichotomies. The scheme of the *disputatio* pervades the antithetical distinctions of concepts, such as Schiller's naive and sentimental poetry, Goethe's real and ideal, antique and modern, the Romantics' Greek and Christian cultural threads, Nietzsche's Apollonian and Dionysian tendencies of Attic tragedies, Riegl's haptic and optic, Worringer's abstraction and empathy, to name but a few.¹¹⁶ Although these oppositions pertain to different issues, such as poetry, tragedy, the visual arts, or general cultural fields, the polarity of the constitution of the concepts implies some sort of

¹¹⁴ *Ren & Bar*, p. 66/88.

¹¹⁵ Wölfflin does not explicitly state this but it is implied in the paired oppositional descriptions.

¹¹⁶ Passarge (1932), p. 169; Hauser (1958), p. 178f; Steadman (1990), p. 6.

internal connection and reciprocal necessity which holds between the two principles. Holly mentioned that it is part of the "Western philosophical project of finding identity" to contrast and differentiate; "oppositions are established so that the friction between them opens up a space of difference".¹¹⁷ Polarity as a model of thought can be found in Wölfflin's contrast of the Baroque with the Renaissance. The fact that an "argument from comparatives had long been a traditional instrument of demonstrative and deliberative rhetoric"¹¹⁸, might be interpreted in the sense that Wölfflin was aware of the rhetorical structure and effect of his text. His staging of the opposition between the architectural effects of the Baroque with the Renaissance follows the recognition that "identity is always based on difference".¹¹⁹ In order to construct an equal status of the two styles as periods, Wölfflin described them both in positive and negative terms.¹²⁰ The connection of these stylistic oppositions appears to have provided a foundation for their equality as periods: they seem to define each other, amounting to an "aesthetics of otherness"¹²¹. The 'other' style, in terms of the balance of positive and negative characteristics, appears to be necessary for a comprehensive, methodical interpretation of both styles.¹²²

But this reciprocal definition of the two styles is fundamentally problematic. The Renaissance is depicted in the text as if it is

¹¹⁷ Holly (1994), p. 360.

¹¹⁸ Steadman (1990), p. 16.

¹¹⁹ Holly (1994), p. 360.

¹²⁰ In a sense, to decrease the value of the Renaissance and to increase the status of the Baroque.

¹²¹ Buci-Glucksmann (1994), p. 129ff. She identifies the Baroque as the 'other'.

¹²² I would like to stress that in this regard, I am not identifying the other with the Baroque per se. Because Wölfflin describes both styles with positive and negative connotations, both styles are, in a sense, 'the other', depending on which style is affirmed and which is negated.

conceptually dependent on the Baroque. Yet this does not make sense when taken out of the immediate context of the text, and when its historical or chronological position is taken into account. The Renaissance was before the Baroque, and was an enabling condition for the Baroque, not the other way around. Wölfflin presents the Renaissance in relation to the Baroque, while it is usually connected to antiquity¹²³, the Middle Ages, or a Protorenaissance¹²⁴. The two styles exist in a historical and chronological field in which the Renaissance, as the earlier style and period, does not depend on a comparison with the Baroque. Despite the text's intention and implications that the Renaissance is conceptually related to the Baroque, in terms of the architectural effects of forms, this is an untenable notion. What Wölfflin is really outlining in Renaissance and Baroque is not a reciprocal definition of the Renaissance and the Baroque, but rather their connection as a binary opposition.

Within the dichotomy of a binary opposition, one term is privileged over the other. The Renaissance is primary in both a logical and a chronological sense. The text exemplifies the primacy of the Renaissance since Wölfflin's conception of the Baroque is actually dependent on the model of the Renaissance as an historical entity and totality. Because Wölfflin wanted to construct 'the Baroque' as a totality and period like 'the Renaissance', the Renaissance is always already framed as a privileged element in the ordering. There can be no conceptual equality of the categories. Apart from just detecting this serious problem in Wölfflin, I would like to emphasise that he made this formulation because he attempted

¹²³ Cf. Burckhardt's The Civilisation of the Renaissance in Italy.

¹²⁴ As done by Wölfflin himself in Classic Art, 1899.

to problematise the thinking which turned the study of the Renaissance into part of the classical ideal in the first place. Within the German art historical discipline, the Renaissance epitomised the dominant discourse and leading scholarship on classicism *against* which Wölfflin intended to argue in terms of the validity and status of the Baroque.

In short, Wölfflin's endeavour to emancipate the Baroque involved two significant but conflicting aspects: the architectural effects of the style of the Baroque were supposed to be different, indeed the opposite of the effects prevalent during the Renaissance, but, at the same time, the category of the Baroque was supposed to be modelled on, that is, equally valid to the status of the Renaissance as an aesthetic period. Because the Baroque was to be constituted as similar to the Renaissance's status, as uniform cultural totality, the Renaissance was set up unconsciously as the paradigm for comparison, which undermines the stylistic opposition between the forms. In this respect, Wölfflin's emancipation of the Baroque from the Renaissance is unsuccessful. On the other hand, it could be argued that the problems which Wölfflin's text frames and actually exemplifies have arguably clarified some of the problems of this debate.¹²⁵

Wölfflin's conception of the Baroque and the Renaissance was regarded as "not independent, either logically or historically" by Gombrich, in his well-known article "Norm and Form".¹²⁶ For Gombrich, they are polarised "terms of exclusion".¹²⁷ Throughout the

¹²⁵ Which also led to the further distinction and emergence of the concept of Mannerism.

¹²⁶ Gombrich (1985), p. 94.

¹²⁷ Gombrich (1985), p. 88.

history of art, the "procession of styles and periods", from the "Classic, Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, Mannerist, Baroque, Rococo, Neo-Classical to the Romantic, represents only a series of masks for two categories, the classical and the non-classical", according to Gombrich.¹²⁸ He argued for "something like an 'essence' of the classical"¹²⁹ in this scheme, although he contested Aristotelian metaphysics which endorse notions of essence and essentialism.¹³⁰ The classical amounts to a 'norm' with respect to the various 'others' of the non-classical, for Gombrich. In this sense, Western art history is regarded as a continuous oscillation between the classical and the non-classical. Janson has argued that Gombrich's "'procession' is far from complete".¹³¹ He omits various elements, such as archaic, Hellenistic and Roman, Byzantine, Carolingian, Ottonian, and medieval, for instance. I would like to argue that although Wölfflin's descriptions of the Baroque depend on the contrast with, as well as on its modelling on the Renaissance, he does not consciously privilege the notion of the classical as such.¹³² On the contrary, he is attempting to emancipate the Baroque from its identity as a 'phase', that is, as subordinated to the Renaissance. The Baroque was supposed to gain and possess an equally valid status. With this, Wölfflin wanted to argue against the primacy and privileging of the Renaissance and the 'classical'.

¹²⁸ Gombrich (1985), p. 83.

¹²⁹ Gombrich (1985), p. 96.

¹³⁰ Summers (1989), p. 380. And it has to be remembered that although Wölfflin talks about the Baroque, his main aim in the 1888 text is to describe the architectural effects of form on the subject as the bodily notions of the architectural objects.

¹³¹ Janson (1970), p. 116.

¹³² A further confirmation that Wölfflin is not contrasting the classical with the non-classical as such can be found in *Classic Art*. In the 1899 text, Wölfflin distinguishes the High Renaissance from the Protorenaissance, that is the immediately preceding era in artistic terms. If he really would have wanted to emphasise the opposition between classical and non-classical styles and periods, he could have compared the 'classical' Renaissance with the 'non-classical' Gothic style.

Wölfflin's dominant issue is the Baroque; in order to characterise this historical field, he differentiates it from the previous style, and parallels it to the paradigmatic example of a cultural period, which is, confusingly, in both cases the Renaissance. Unfortunately, the use of the Renaissance unintentionally embraces the very predominance of the Renaissance he aimed to overcome. This explains why Gombrich's reading is made possible by Wölfflin's text. But Gombrich's reduction of diverse styles and periods to the interplay of the norm of the 'classical' and the alternatives of the 'non-classical' is his very own version of the theory of the developmental aspect of the arts. A theory which had already been advanced before by "Kugler and Schnaase [who] understood art history as a repeated dialectical encounter of *two equally valid stylistic tendencies* ... the complex historical cross-fertilisation between Latin classicism and medieval Germanic Christianity".¹³³ With regard to Wölfflin's 1888 text, Kugler, Schnaase and Gombrich looked at a much wider cultural and chronological field than Wölfflin who focused his analysis on architectural effects in Rome in the 16th century.

When Gombrich stated that for the 1888 text Wölfflin's "*starting point* -like Burckhardt's- was the classical ideal of perfection in architecture"¹³⁴, he was wrong in respect to Wölfflin's thematic intentions. Wölfflin's 'starting point' was certainly the Baroque.¹³⁵ Gombrich almost admitted as much, when he continues his sentence: "he [Wölfflin] wanted only to plead for more tolerance in

¹³³ Schwarzer (1995b), p. 27. My emphasis.

¹³⁴ Gombrich (1985), p. 91. My emphasis.

¹³⁵ As the subtitle of the text makes clear: 'Investigation into the Nature and Emergence of the Baroque Style in Italy'

the acceptance of alternative procedures"¹³⁶, meaning the Baroque. This confirms my interpretation that Wölfflin intended to increase the status of the Baroque, precisely against the conventional privilege given to the Renaissance. The conceptual dependence of the Baroque on the Renaissance, what Gombrich called Wölfflin's unconscious "restatement of the classical norm"¹³⁷, is not just the acknowledgement of 'alternatives', but, more importantly, it is an argument which wanted to avoid the conventional position that the Renaissance has prominence. Gombrich was correct to problematise the question of 'norm and alternative' in which the historicist multiplicity of styles emerged in the 19th century. But it could be argued that *only because* the "binary system of significance was absolutely central to the emergence of classicism"¹³⁸ itself, in the normative evaluation of the classical from the 16th century¹³⁹ to the 18th century, it became also necessarily part of the conception of the Baroque.¹⁴⁰ Wölfflin had to confront but could not completely overcome this classicist prejudice and its inherent privileging of the Renaissance in his attempt to argue for the equal validity for the Baroque. The Renaissance (or more generally classicism) as the standard by which other styles and periods were judged, created the attitude which Wölfflin wanted to abandon. And although Wölfflin's main theme is the Baroque, his theory of history which is based on a notion of development, necessarily had

¹³⁶ Gombrich (1985), p. 91.

¹³⁷ Gombrich (1985), p. 91.

¹³⁸ MacLeod (1998), p. 25.

¹³⁹ Bazin (1968), p. 19.

¹⁴⁰ This means that the concept of 'the classical vs. the non-classical' was developed foremostly by arguments and characterisations of the classical, and was only later included into demarcations of alternatives. The classical describes or references itself, while the non-classical is related to the classic, as a point of negative reference.

to include the Renaissance, both because this was the style chronologically prior to the Baroque, and because the Renaissance was the paradigmatic cultural totality in terms of periodisation. As a cultural unity and period, the Renaissance provided a framework for the construction of the category of the Baroque. In this sense, the classical ideal was *not* a 'normative touchstone' as such for Wölfflin¹⁴¹. The Renaissance was an aspect of the historical exploration of the Baroque. To show the identity of the Baroque meant to show its difference to the earlier style. "The Baroque", Wölfflin writes, "is something fundamentally new which cannot be deduced from what went before"¹⁴², but it had to be *related* to what went before, precisely to manifest this difference. This confirms that Wölfflin compared the Baroque to the Renaissance not in terms of 'norm and alternative', but, rather, in terms of a contingent consecutive connection. The dependence of the characterisation of the effects of the Baroque on their difference to the Renaissance centres on the chronological aspect and is not based on a relation to an aesthetic norm as such. The emancipation of the status of the Baroque as being equal to the Renaissance made it necessary to present both, positive and negative definitions and classifications of the Baroque *and* of the Renaissance. Despite the description of both styles in the dichotomous characterisations of the comparison and in the title¹⁴³ Wölfflin wanted to characterise the Baroque, as the

¹⁴¹ As Gombrich described Wölfflin's lectures. Gombrich (1985), p. 92.

¹⁴² *Ren & Bar*, p. 54/75. My emphasis.

¹⁴³ The title, *Renaissance and Baroque*, in its terminological arrangement of the two styles and periods already suggests a privileging of the Renaissance; the Baroque is positioned as secondary. In my opinion, the text should be called 'Baroque and Renaissance', because it is about the conceptual delineation of the Baroque, with reference to the Renaissance.

subtitle¹⁴⁴, the chapter headings¹⁴⁵ of Part One, and most of the illustrations of the 1888 text clearly manifest. Wölfflin's principal theme is the Baroque. The inclusion of the architectural effects of the Renaissance is a strategic element in the method of comparison.¹⁴⁶ He also presented this dichotomy with the help of illustrations.

Visual material was important to Wölfflin, as a note suggests: "photographs at all costs".¹⁴⁷ The illustrations present plans, elevations, sections, three-dimensional drawings, depictions of details and photographs. Mostly Baroque structures are presented. This focus of the illustrations on the Baroque is further evidence that Wölfflin's main issue is the Baroque. At the same time, Wölfflin captures the development from the Renaissance to the Baroque in comparative illustrations, side by side drawings of balustrades¹⁴⁸ and moulding profiles of column bases (socle profiles)¹⁴⁹. While the illustrations are positioned at regular intervals throughout the German publication¹⁵⁰, in the English translation, the illustrations are arranged consecutively in three groupings in the text^{151, 152}. This gathering of the

¹⁴⁴ "Eine Untersuchung über Wesen und Entstehung des Barockstils in Italien", "An Investigation into the Nature and Emergence (translated as Origin) of the Baroque Style in Italy"

¹⁴⁵ 'Der malerische Stil', 'Der grosse Stil', 'Massigkeit', and 'Bewegung'; 'The painterly style', 'The grand style', 'Massiveness', and 'Movement'.

¹⁴⁶ This has been the first analysis of the theme of comparison. The issue is not concluded; it comes up again in the chapter on the *Principles*. There the theoretical perspective is extended and the form of two illustrations is explored.

¹⁴⁷ Notebook 15 (1887/88), p. 17v. "Photographien um jeden Preis".

¹⁴⁸ *Ren & Bar*, fig. 2, p. 25/fig.1; 2, p. 40.

¹⁴⁹ *Ren & Bar*, fig. 4, p. 33/fig. 5, p. 49.

¹⁵⁰ In the 3rd edition of 1908, upon which I based my analysis.

¹⁵¹ Illustrations 1.-11. are located between pp. 32 and 33; illustr. 12.-26. between pp. 96/97; and illustr. 27.-33. between pp. 144/145.

¹⁵² The English translation presents further changes from the German edition. In the translation the historicity of the illustrations has shifted with an increase in 18th perspectival prints which present figures in contemporary 18th century clothing. The English edition depicts the text with historical images rather than new and up-to-date (i.e. contemporary, made in the 1960s) photographs, possibly to indicate that

visual material in the English translation increases the comparative and the developmental aspect of the illustrations. The development and the differences between the individual structures are made more explicit than in the German edition.¹⁵³

With regard to the illustrations, Wölfflin (or later editors) could have included reproductions of figurative paintings and sculptures to further the argument about the corporeal and psychological *Formgefühl* of the time. By doing this he could have provided a more anthropologically *kulturgeschichtliche* quality to his text, uniting and comparing the various media (architecture, painting and sculpture) as expressions of the *Stimmung*, mood, of the forms and of the bodily *Zeitgeist*.

The illustrations of the architectural material afford a dimension of experience for the reader, who has become a viewer. Reproductions allow for a direct confrontation with the object: the architectural forms of the Baroque. The bodily encounter, the *Erlebnis* of the objects by the subject, on which Wölfflin's conception of architecture is grounded, is predicated by the illustrations. In the 1880s, the technology of photography was still sufficiently new to persuade viewers that the images captured reality, provoking a bodily response to the photographs as if they were buildings. Rigggenbach noted that the exemplification of the change is made

the text belongs to an earlier era (the 19th century) of art historical writing. The historicity of the images in the English translation affects the level of relevance and actuality of the text: 18th century depictions of 16th century structures increase the remoteness of the objects discussed. New photographs automatically update the book and the scholarship presented in the text. This aspect is significant for all later editions of the texts. The editors make a definite choice whether they want to present a historical analysis (of objects in history) or a historiographical text (an example of a certain art historical position or methodology). The historicity of the included images (18th century drawings, dated or new photographs) indicates the understanding and the positioning of the text by the editors.

¹⁵³ The groupings of images in the English translation bring the differences together, order them and give them meaning as a direction(ality).

visual "in front of the surprised eyes of the reader ... one sees how the forms... take on a different shape, as if one were watching living creatures and not architecture".¹⁵⁴ The illustrations function as a visual enactment of the materiality and corporeality of the architectural objects for a bodily experience which Wölfflin held to be pivotal for the understanding of architecture. The illustrations make an understanding of the Baroque in terms of visual experience possible.¹⁵⁵

It is significant that the technique of photography has strongly influenced the scholarship on the Baroque. Before photographs were introduced in scholarly analyses, classically trained draftsmen were unable to draw Baroque structures satisfactorily in perspectival views. Baroque architecture needed the medium of photographic reproductions for their architectural effects to be understood by theorists and historians.

DEVELOPMENT

In *Renaissance and Baroque* Wölfflin wanted to elucidate the emergence of the Baroque. The notion of development is already established -without any explicit argument- through Wölfflin's language of description.¹⁵⁶ The paired characterisations indicate a chronological predication of a development due to the divergent choices of verb tenses. Wölfflin selected the past tense for his descriptions of the Renaissance and the present tense for the Baroque, which immediately implies a change over time, and

¹⁵⁴ Ruggenbach (1945/46), p. 3.

¹⁵⁵ Although the illustrations provide merely a visual experience, the presented objects are still spatial forms which the subject perceives and comprehends to certain extent with a bodily notion of three-dimensional form.

identifies the Baroque with the here and now.¹⁵⁷ He also structured his statements with adverbs which reveal a sequential configuration. These notions of transformation across time connect the characterisations of the two styles as elements of a chronological process, for instance, with "once (*einst*)..., now (*nun*)..."¹⁵⁸, "no longer..."¹⁵⁹, "in the place of... in the Renaissance appear..." and "...is gone, everything becomes..."¹⁶⁰, "...no more...has to now..."¹⁶¹, "becomes", and "getting more and more"¹⁶². Wölfflin used a vocabulary which alludes explicitly to development, for example, "changing"¹⁶³, "process" and "transition"¹⁶⁴, "giving way to"¹⁶⁵, "modification"¹⁶⁶, "replacement" and "substitution"¹⁶⁷, "disappearance"¹⁶⁸, and "get replaced"¹⁶⁹. Wölfflin's thesis of the emergence of the Baroque as the opposition to and the development from the Renaissance is positioned in the dichotomous terminology of description. The language of development presents a movement towards the Baroque.

A further chronological transformation is manifested in Wölfflin's characterisation of the Renaissance as "the old"¹⁷⁰, "old

¹⁵⁶ This indirect portrayal of transition is presented in part one of the text, entitled 'The Nature of the Change in Style'.

¹⁵⁷ *Ren & Bar*, p. 17/31; 19/33; 20/(34); 37/(53); 42/(60). Note that in the English edition on the pages in brackets, this differentiation was not duplicated in the translation.

¹⁵⁸ *Ren & Bar*, p. 17/31.

¹⁵⁹ *Ren & Bar*, p. 31/(46); 38/(54); 47/64. Again, the bracketed page numbers of the English edition do not include the direct translation of the German terminology.

¹⁶⁰ *Ren & Bar*, p. 58/80.

¹⁶¹ *Ren & Bar*, p. 59/80f.

¹⁶² *Ren & Bar*, p. 59/81.

¹⁶³ *Ren & Bar*, p. 52/73. "wandelt sich".

¹⁶⁴ *Ren & Bar*, p. 1/15. "Prozess" translated as 'progression', 'Übergang' translated as 'development'.

¹⁶⁵ *Ren & Bar*, p. 33/(47, translated as replaced); 46/63. 'weicht'.

¹⁶⁶ *Ren & Bar*, p. 52/73. "die Veränderung", translated as change.

¹⁶⁷ *Ren & Bar*, p. 34/50 and twice on p. 35/51. "Verdrängung".

¹⁶⁸ *Ren & Bar*, p. 35/50. "Das Verschwinden" also used three times as verb: p. 41/(58, translated as 'were shed'); 45/63; 47/64.

¹⁶⁹ *Ren & Bar*, p. 41/58. "werden ersetzt".

¹⁷⁰ *Ren & Bar*, p. 52/73. "das Alte".

style"¹⁷¹ and as "former/earlier"¹⁷², and the Baroque as "new"¹⁷³, "stilo moderno"¹⁷⁴, and with the term "now"¹⁷⁵. The notions of old and new imply a substitution and replacement, that is, a development across time. The characterisation of the Baroque as "now" applied, on the one hand, to the Baroque buildings from the 16th century, in opposition to the earlier style of the Renaissance. On the other hand, this description also reflects the revival of the Baroque style in Wölfflin's own time.¹⁷⁶ Wölfflin's 'own time' is included linguistically as if it was part of the historical timeframe for the analysis of the 16th century Roman Baroque. The 'now' of Wölfflin's own historicity is incorporated into his analysis. The Baroque is described as being part of contemporary reality.¹⁷⁷ The Baroque is linked to the late 19th century. This implies that Wölfflin rhetorically recognised that access to history is possible from the position of the present (Dilthey). At the same time, Wölfflin understood his own time as positively similar to the Baroque in its psychological mood and

¹⁷¹ *Ren & Bar*, p. 17/(30); 20/34; 21/35.

¹⁷² *Ren & Bar*, p. 20/35; 42/60. "früher".

¹⁷³ *Ren & Bar*, p. 10/(23): "Das Neue"; also in relation to p. 4/19: "das neue Formgefühl, the new feeling of form", translated as "new conception of form"; p. 42/60: "neues Gefühl, new sentiment", translated as "new taste" and "neue Art, new way", translated as "new approach"; p. 46/63: "neuer Geist, new spirit"; p. 52/73: "der neue Stil, the new style"; p. 55/76: "etwas neues, something new/novel"; p. 66/88: "neue Kunst, new art", translated as "new style". Interestingly, Wölfflin also includes the notion of the "new" in his 1899 text, *Classic Art*, where he delineates the emergence of the High Renaissance from the earlier Protorenaissance. In part two of this later text, he labels his chapters consistently with this adjective: 'The New Ideals' (*Gesinnung*), 'The New Beauty' (*Schönheit*), and 'The New Pictorial Form' (*Bildform*).

¹⁷⁴ *Ren & Bar*, p. 10/23. The "stilo moderno", Wölfflin explains, "describes everything which does not belong to the antique or the 'stilo tedesco (gotico)'".

¹⁷⁵ *Ren & Bar*, p. 19/-, 20/-, 43/-. The translation of "jetzt" was not included in the English edition.

¹⁷⁶ The revival of the Baroque style can be situated in the last third of the 19th century, while Neo-classical architecture emerged already in the 18th century. This means that within the architectural context of Wölfflin's time, the (Neo-)Baroque, also called *Zopfstil*, was more recent than (Neo-)classical structures. Also, several Neo-Baroque buildings were erected within Wölfflin's present, his 'now', such as, the Opera Garnier in Paris (1854-74), the Semperoper in Dresden (1871-78), the Schloss Herrenchiemsee (1878-86), and the Neue Hofburg in Vienna (1881-1914).

¹⁷⁷ This particular conception implies the idea that the Baroque might be an ongoing development, extending to the 19th century present, which was later postulated by other scholars, and which fundamentally underlies the contemporary notion to identify and re-label the field of the Baroque as the "early modern".

formal content. The late 19th century is explicitly compared to the Baroque in the text: "one can hardly fail to recognise the affinity that our own age in particular bears to the Italian Baroque".¹⁷⁸ When Wölfflin connects the 19th century to the Baroque, he offers a definition both of the Baroque and of a certain self-identity.¹⁷⁹

Wölfflin also framed the Baroque in opposition to the Renaissance in terms of spatial proximity and distance: "here" connotes the Baroque, while "there" signifies the Renaissance.¹⁸⁰ The concept of transformation is a matter of increasing approximation and closeness in this instance. All this suggests that Wölfflin associated and affiliated the Baroque with his own sphere of existence in time and space. The interpretation of the semantic structure in terms of the notion of development pertains to the argument about the Baroque as a dominant theme of the text. The conception of the Baroque is regulating Wölfflin's examination.¹⁸¹

The relation between the Renaissance and the Baroque as contrast of opposing differences and, at the same time, as notion of development is problematic. With reference to the idea of opposites, Wölfflin notes that "neither of these extremes [meaning the Renaissance and the Baroque], of course, exist in a pure

¹⁷⁸ *Ren & Bar*, p. 65/87.

¹⁷⁹ The relation between the Baroque and the late 19th century, Wölfflin's 'now', is a description of the 16th century in contemporary terms, the present explains the past to some degrees. While the linking of the 19th century to the Baroque, is an elucidation or an exploration of the 19th century, with respect, similarities and possible continuities of the Baroque. The direction of the two comparisons is relevant; they are manifesting different arguments: one is about the Baroque, the other is about the 19th century. Wölfflin makes both arguments: his text is about the Baroque, but, at the same time, he is discussing certain aspects of the 19th century.

¹⁸⁰ *Ren & Bar*, p. 17/31. "hier", "dort".

¹⁸¹ This aspect is part and parcel of the argument of the emancipation of the Baroque. All comparisons and relations of the Baroque to other eras are done in order to distinguish and differentiate, but also to link, affiliate and define, to circumscribe and identify the Baroque as a cultural totality of bodiliness.

state".¹⁸² This implies a transitional moment within the contrasting conception itself. Wölfflin further writes that he is "not of the opinion that a style during its evolution is a uniformly pure expression of its time".¹⁸³ This means that during the emergence of the Baroque various tendencies coexisted, and possibly, that objects need to be placed along a spectrum tending towards the abstracted and idealised conceptions of the two styles as poles and opposites. In doing this, Wölfflin has, thereby, relativised and amalgamated the notions of difference and transition. Apart from the conceptual dichotomy of the two styles, the historical reality is also comprised in terms of a developmental process.

Wölfflin merges confusingly a theoretical distinction into opposites with a historical pattern of an evolution or transition from one style to the other. But, surprisingly, the field of architecture accommodates this conflicting merger. The continuity between the Renaissance and the Baroque is constituted through the same architectural forms and elements, the vocabulary of columns and pilasters, architraves, pediments and gables, mouldings and balustrades which were used in both styles. Distinct combinations of these same elements result in divergent effects, combining the notions of difference and discontinuity. Wölfflin's textual operation is an analysis of the effects of form, an examination of the specific and diverse organisational and compositional patterns of similar elements, in order to distinguish between the different impacts of the resulting spatiality.

¹⁸² *Ren & Bar*, p. 16/30. "dass von einem ausschliessendem Gegensatz niemals die Rede sein kann".

¹⁸³ *Ren & Bar*, p. 57/79.

In short, the difference between the architectural effects of the Baroque and the Renaissance is established by diverse sets of composition, articulation and the integration of similar architectural elements. The architectural vocabulary as such provides a continuity while the different sets of compositions and resulting effects establish the difference and the contrast in style, and the discontinuity in terms of periods.

Wölfflin presents two theories about the causes for the change from the Renaissance to the Baroque. The first one is the "theory of blunted sensibilities"¹⁸⁴. "The change appears as a necessary one"¹⁸⁵, and this necessity comes from within¹⁸⁶. The development is independent from the context of the time.¹⁸⁷ This means that architectural effects are produced by an autonomous¹⁸⁸ development of forms. People merely react to the forms which no longer hold any charm or impact.¹⁸⁹ Schwartz noted that this is an interpretation of "culture as comprised of subjects who respond to novelty and stimulation, precisely in the way that the cultural subject of modernity, the consumer in the mass market, was described by Wölfflin's contemporaries".¹⁹⁰ The past is constructed in this 'theory of blunted sensibilities' in terms of the (19th century) present. Wölfflin regards this theory as unconvincing, however, because the nature of

¹⁸⁴ *Ren & Bar*, p. 52ff/73ff. "Theorie der Abstumpfung".

¹⁸⁵ *Ren & Bar*, p. 52/73. Cf. also Wölfflin's footnote 2) on page 54/3. on p.167, where he notes that when the 'new style' is seen as a "necessary reaction" against the 'old style', Hegel's pattern of dialectic progression is involved, in which the aspect of the opposition is the driving element in the development. In my opinion, Wölfflin is contesting the term 'necessary' in this footnote, as quasi teleological implication of the development in terms of a logical progress. This is indicated in his statement about the Baroque "being something completely new, and not deducible from what went before" (p. 54/75).

¹⁸⁶ *Ren & Bar*, p. 53/74.

¹⁸⁷ *Ren & Bar*, p. 53/74.

¹⁸⁸ *Ren & Bar*, p. 53/74. "gleichsam von selbst", "as if of their own accord".

¹⁸⁹ *Ren & Bar*, p. 52/73.

¹⁹⁰ Schwartz (2005), p. 19.

the Baroque style is not explained apart from this general jading and dissatisfaction.¹⁹¹

The other theory, the psychological¹⁹² one, posits the "history of style as a reflection of the changes in human, *menschlichem Dasein*".¹⁹³ In this view, Wölfflin argues that "the Baroque is something fundamentally new".¹⁹⁴ An "architectural style is the expression of its time"¹⁹⁵, it mediates the basic mood (*Grundstimmung*) of the time¹⁹⁶. Architecture "is an expression of the time *in so far as it reflects the bodily, körperliches Dasein*, the particular deportment and habits of movement"¹⁹⁷, as well as the idealised body images of the people¹⁹⁸. Wölfflin directly implicates the theory of his doctoral dissertation: architecture is an effect of the perception and reception of an embodied subject. He writes, "We judge every object by analogy with our own bodies".¹⁹⁹ Architecture pertains to this "*unbewusste Beseelung*", it is unconsciously endowed with life and a soul, it is anthropomorphised.²⁰⁰ For Wölfflin, architecture can be "reduced to the human figure which is an immediate expression of something psychological and emotional".²⁰¹ In the 1888 text, the bodiliness of the architectural effects of the Roman Renaissance and Baroque is presented with countless references to the body, clothing, musculature and flesh, as well as

¹⁹¹ *Ren & Bar*, p. 54/74.

¹⁹² *Ren & Bar*, p. 55/76.

¹⁹³ *Ren & Bar*, p. 52/73. "*in der Stilgeschichte ein Abbild der Veränderung im menschlichen Dasein*".

¹⁹⁴ *Ren & Bar*, p. 54/75.

¹⁹⁵ *Ren & Bar*, p. 55/76.

¹⁹⁶ *Ren & Bar*, p. 56/77.

¹⁹⁷ *Ren & Bar*, p. 65f/78. My emphasis.

¹⁹⁸ *Ren & Bar*, p. 57/78. "*was der Mensch sein möchte / what the subject wants, aspires to be*".

¹⁹⁹ *Ren & Bar*, p. 56/77. "*Jeden Gegenstand beurteilen wir nach Analogie unseres Körpers*".

²⁰⁰ *Ren & Bar*, p. 65/78

with allusions to psychological, emotional and mental states and conditions, and physical bodily movements.²⁰²

The two theories of the cause of stylistic change are judged by Wölfflin in terms of their conception and definition of architectural forms. The theory of blunted sensibilities advocates the autonomous development of form; Wölfflin mentions the biological image of "blossoming and withering".²⁰³ The subject seems merely to respond to this independent evolution of the forms. Wölfflin criticises the limited conception of the subject in terms of its fading *Formgefühl*, the feeling of form, for missing "the complete liveliness and reality of the subject".²⁰⁴ The psychological theory is based on the involvement of the subject. The bodiliness of the subject constitutes an understanding of the architecture, and, more importantly, constructs Wölfflin's argument about the emergence of the Baroque as different architectural style and as emancipated cultural entity and period. The Baroque evolves from, but is different to the Renaissance precisely because of the divergent architectural manifestations of the historicity of bodiliness. The nature of the effects of the architectural forms and the bodily depictions²⁰⁵ themselves change, Wölfflin argues, because the bodily, *körperliches Dasein* and the cultural mood²⁰⁶ have shifted. "But with an explanation of that kind", Friedrich correctly noted, "the problem [of the reasons for the change] is merely transferred to another level of discourse; for it is equally problematic how the appearance of this

²⁰¹ *Ren & Bar*, p. 58/80. "Ausdruck eines Seelischen", translated as "an expression of the spiritual".

²⁰² *Ren & Bar*, p. 58ff/80ff. The body is mentioned nineteen times in these descriptions.

²⁰³ *Ren & Bar*, p. 53/74. "Aufblühen und Welken".

²⁰⁴ *Ren & Bar*, p. 53/74.

²⁰⁵ *Ren & Bar*, p. 58f/80f.

new *Form-* or *Lebensgefühl* may be explained".²⁰⁷ When Wölfflin conceives the architectural object through the bodiliness of the subject, "he cannot explain the formal development; he can only postulate laws about it, which is something quite different", as Schwartz observed.²⁰⁸ Indeed, Wölfflin can not present a theory of the causes for the change.²⁰⁹ Rather, he introduces a particular conception of how the changes can be identified, and thereby how architectural styles can be recognised and distinguished. With regard to the field of architectural effects, the bodiliness of subject and object constitutes the identification mechanism within which differences, developments and change can be recognised. The notion of bodiliness as such does not manifest any reason for these differentiations. Wölfflin mentions briefly changing religious attitudes within 16th century society and changing tendencies in literature²¹⁰, but these comments are too succinct to amount to an account for the change in style. In my view, this second part of the text continues to argue for the change in style in terms of the emergence of the Baroque. Wölfflin does not answer the questions he posed at the beginning of this section: "Why did the Renaissance end? Why does this style of the Baroque follow?".²¹¹ The importance he places on the discontinuity of the two periods implies, in my opinion, a paradigmatic and fundamental difference between the two

²⁰⁶ *Ren & Bar*, p. 62ff/83ff.

²⁰⁷ Friedrich (1955), p. 146.

²⁰⁸ Schwartz (2005), p. 23.

²⁰⁹ This aspect further reflects the tension between Wölfflin's intentions and the formulations in the text. He wanted to give reasons for the change, as the title of part two indicates, 'The Causes for the Change in Style'. But he only presents theories through which style, not the change as such, can be identified.

²¹⁰ *Ren & Bar*, p. 62ff/83ff.

²¹¹ *Ren & Bar*, p. 52/71.

architectural styles. Wölfflin wants the Baroque to be a style and a period in its own right.

Various themes of Wölfflin's Renaissance and Baroque have been analysed, among them the influence of Burckhardt and the particular terminology of the text, as well as the method of comparison which aims to set up the conflicting notions of equality, differences as oppositions and development. In this interpretation of the themes several conceptual ambiguities have been identified. These slippages have been singled out in order to show the split between Wölfflin's intentions and his actual formulations in the text. The conceptual problems are symptomatic and indicative for the paradoxical intellectual condition out of which Wölfflin and others framed the discipline of art history in the 19th century. The problems of the text are part and parcel of the interplay of the distinct but also interlocked fields of architectural theory and art history, of *Wissenschaftlichkeit* and the general intellectual discourse, which will be explored in the next part of this chapter.

the historicity of bodiliness

Wölfflin's 1888 text has to be located within the various discourses to which the work alludes. This involves its relation to the Prolegomena and its idea of bodiliness. The text Renaissance and Baroque can be seen as an extension of the architectural theory into the concrete historical field, of 16th century Rome. The notion of the body in the Prolegomena reflects Wölfflin's concern for a *kulturgeschichtliche* anthropology which becomes more obvious when read in combination with his unpublished archive. Wölfflin's exploration of the Baroque and the Renaissance is an inquiry into the effects of architectural forms and objects. In this regard, architectural theory, history and practice provide relevant discourses with which the text resonates. The 19th century discourse on the revival of historical styles in both texts and built form presented Wölfflin with a model for his dichotomous conception of 'the Baroque vs. the Renaissance'. He employed the historicisation of his theoretical propositions about architecture to manifest his *Wissenschaftlichkeit*. His methodological concern involved the notions of a systematic and developmental history. With reference to the archival material, the 1888 text reflects the conjunction in Wölfflin's thinking between the theoretical elaboration and implementation of his analysis of history. The link between the theoretical and historical aspects is explored in relation to Hegel's ideas. In the art historical discourse, the text illustrates implications of the notion of style for the practice of historical analysis but also for art

history's intellectual self-identification during the 19th century. The exploration of these various discourses attempts to demonstrate the inherent problems and contradictions of the discipline of art history which permeate Wölfflin's text.

Renaissance and Baroque is Wölfflin's *Habilitation*¹ which he published after spending the Winter of 1886/87 on a scholarship at the German Archaeological Institute in Rome. Wölfflin's exploration of 16th century architecture in Rome displays the crucial factor of a direct experience of the structures upon which he based his definition of the architecture of the Baroque and of the Renaissance in the text. As described in the previous chapter, he constitutes the architectural object through the experiencing subject. The inter-subjective *Einfühlung*, empathy, with which the subject experiences and reflects upon the bodily identity of an object from the past constitutes a particular theory of architecture.² Wölfflin expresses his notion of architecture through the physiological, physical and psychological language of his prose, echoing his own experiences of the buildings in Rome.

The linguistic and conceptual dimensions of the text evoke his underlying commitment to a *kulturgeschichtliche* anthropology of the subject, the *Mensch*. The ontological foundation of bodiliness enables the subject to register the cultural changes of architectural effects and of artistic depictions of the human body-images and body-ideals, and the cultural continuity of the category of the body. In Wölfflin's notebooks, the explorations of body-images in figurative

¹ The *Habilitation* is a second dissertation necessary in order to take up an academic position in the German University system.

painting and their pivotal relation to architectural forms, expression and effects in the text, indicate his interest in the human subject. While the body is an apriori category, it makes access to the historical past possible, the text Renaissance and Baroque is Wölfflin's exemplification of a more concrete historicity of the bodiliness of the subject. The 1888 text presents the argument that the architectural effects of the Baroque are based on a different attitude of bodiliness than that exhibited during the Renaissance. The historical framework of the 16th century is a framework in which to situate an inquiry into the historical versions of the bodiliness of the Renaissance and of the Baroque. The Baroque and the Renaissance exemplify historical particulars which -in Wölfflin's view- illustrate the theoretical concepts with which the inquiry is undertaken. At the same time, the architectural object functions as an interface between Wölfflin's investigation of history and his continued theoretical speculation about the subject. In Rome, Wölfflin made a number of significant comments in his notebooks. These entries relate his architectural experiences to his ideas about the constitution of the subject in history. He wrote: "from history one eventually, finally comes back, returns to the human subject".³ The diversity of bodiliness through history leads to the universalisation of the subject. Wölfflin asked himself Kant's fourth philosophical question: "was ist der Mensch (what is the human being/subject)" repeatedly in the unpublished material.⁴ In his notebook Wölfflin summarised art history thus: "body – anatomy; expression and physiognomy; clothing: materials and

² *Ren & Bar*, p. 56f/77ff.

³ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 50. "aus den Geschichten kommt man endlich wieder zum Menschen".

⁴ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 47; 52.

their folding patterns"⁵. This entry indicates a view of the discipline of art history in terms of the human subject and as aspects of bodily articulation, perception and depiction, which are manifested in characteristics of form and clothing. Wölfflin wrote that "the *wissenschaftliche* treatment of history ... should put everything in relation and connection, and focus on the central juncture: the human soul".⁶ He noted that "philosophy [is the] *Wissenschaft* of the human being, the subject"⁷, which indicates his theoretical concern with the subject. Wölfflin advocated that "there has to be an approach which looked at the development of the *entire* human being".⁸ "*Kulturgeschichte*", he wrote, "should not just add-on individual disciplines, but an organic connection has to be established. Central: the human being".⁹ Wölfflin reiterated the same issues: the philosophical and the *kulturgeschichtliche* dimensions of the subject, which for him consisted of "types of human development ... [and the] enrichment through studies of the human being".¹⁰ His interest in anthropological knowledge which looked for "laws of human nature (*Gesetze der Menschennatur*)"¹¹ can be interpreted as reflecting his theoretical and historical interests in the subject. The body in all this reflects "the romantic idea of anthropomorphic world unity".¹² For Wölfflin, art and architecture,

⁵ Notebook 15 (1887/88), p. 24.

⁶ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 158. "*wissenschaftliche Behandlung der Historie ... in einen Zusammenhang gebracht ... alles auf einen Centralpunkt hinweisend: die menschliche Seele*".

⁷ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 139. "*Philosophie: Wissenschaft vom Menschlichen*".

⁸ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 107. "*Es muss eine Betrachtungsweise geben, die die Entwicklung des ganzen Menschen im Auge hat*". (Wölfflin's emphasis)

⁹ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 136. "*So soll Kulturgeschichte nicht nur die einzelnen Disziplinen aneinanderfügen, sondern sie muss einen organischen Zusammenhang schaffen. Mittelpunkt: der Mensch*".

¹⁰ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 181. "*Typen der menschlichen Entwicklung ... Bereicherung durch Studium des Menschen*".

¹¹ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 21.

¹² Schwarzer (1995a), p. 218.

and particularly architectural effects, provide historical knowledge about bodiliness in order to comprehend the human subject in general. In the *Prolegomena* and in *Renaissance and Baroque* Wölfflin concentrates on the *menschliche*, anthropological articulation of bodiliness in architectural form. The human body is the instrument with which to capture and understand differences in architectural effects, forms and objects of the past. For Wölfflin, the human body in art and architecture is a discursive formation of the human subject with which he substantiated his conception of *Kulturgeschichte*: how culture differentiates and unites all human beings.

At the same time, knowledge of the past functions as an understanding of the present, the modern condition. In a notebook, literature and art are cited under the rubric of 'late cultural history' (*nevere Kulturgeschichte*, meaning since the Renaissance), with the aim to "comprehend the *modern* subject and *modern* problems".¹³ Wölfflin directly asserted "the advantage" of the "usability [of *nevere Kulturgeschichte*] for the present".¹⁴ The link between the Baroque and the late 19th century to which Wölfflin directly points in the text¹⁵, gives this historical inquiry of architecture an additional dimension: to comprehend the complex cultural identity of the present time, the late 19th century. Wölfflin conceived this *kulturgeschichtliche* anthropology of architecture also as a means to understand the present climate of 19th century historicism.

¹³ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 116f. "*Begreifen des modernen Menschen und der modernen Probleme*". My emphasis.

¹⁴ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 116. "*Verwendbarkeit für die Gegenwart*".

¹⁵ *Ren & Bar*, p. 65/87.

Wölfflin mentions the 'official' and conventional *kultur-historische* characterisations and publications in the 1888 text¹⁶, which treat art and architecture as sources for a social, intellectual or political history. He criticises this approach for only identifying or naming the relations, such as between the Gothic style and scholasticism, without any concerns for the nature of this relation.¹⁷ Wölfflin's approach towards *Kulturgeschichte* focused precisely on this affinity and bond. He commented on the relationship of bodily forms of the subject to intellectual notions: "anatomy, connect [it] to the examination of the intellectual ideas of the time".¹⁸ He concentrated his *kulturgeschichtliche* examination on the interpretation of forms as expressions of the attitudes of people towards their bodies (their bodily moods). This reading of Wölfflin's text in combination with the notebooks creates a particular interpretation of his attitudes. This Wölfflinian conception of *Kulturgeschichte* centres on the human subject and thereby can be identified as *menschliche*, anthropological dimension of *Kulturgeschichte*. It is important to note that Wölfflin's notion of *Kulturgeschichte*, as explored here and in the previous chapter, stands in marked difference to other conceptions of the field at the time¹⁹, as he himself made clear in the text²⁰. Wölfflin's notebooks allow a unique view into his ideas and theories of the human subject which are implied in the language of the published text but are

¹⁶ *Ren & Bar*, p. 55/76.

¹⁷ *Ren & Bar*, p. 56/77. Wölfflin poses the question: "what is the way, the path, the link between the cell of the scholastic philosopher and the mason's, the architect's yard?".

¹⁸ Notebook 15 (1887/88), p. 18v: "Anatomie, damit aber verbinden die Betrachtung des Ideenkreises der Zeit".

¹⁹ As, for instance, exemplified by Warburg who incorporated the imagery of religious beliefs, symbols, ceremonies and rituals, social habits as well as intellectual ideas in his conception of cultural history.

²⁰ *Ren & Bar*, p. 55/76.

never directly presented. The archival material makes this distinct reading of the 1888 text, specifically with regard to the descriptive language and the concept of the body, in terms of a *kulturhistorische* anthropology feasible and necessary.

Architecture perceived as experience was the mechanism with which Wölfflin aimed to comprehend the effects and forms of the Baroque. The bodiliness which hinges the subject to the architectural object permeates the specification of architecture as spatiality. This means, Wölfflin is concerned with buildings as a projection by the body which registers the effects of the building's form. The notion of form that Wölfflin employs is about the building as space, rather than just about the building. Architecture is constituted by the perception and reception of spatiality by the subject. This interpretation reflects the general argument of the present thesis that Wölfflin constructs an aesthetics of perception and reception. In terms of architectural theory, this conception delineates an approach to architecture as knowledge and no longer as an objective essence.²¹ Wölfflin's notion of bodiliness was a mechanism with which to capture this knowledge. "What the shift from ontology to epistemology signified was a transformation of inquiry from the field of fixed bodies to that of movable human agents and historical forces".²² Schwarzer observed that the "epistemological inquiry drove writers beyond built form into the mind of designers, users, and viewers".²³ Wölfflin's ideas reflect this

²¹ This aspect was previously discussed in the discussion of the body with regard to anthropocentrism and anthropomorphism.

²² Schwarzer (1995a), p. 262.

²³ Schwarzer (1995a), p. 262.

focus on the subject as viewing and experiencing the architectural object.

In his analysis of architectural effects, Wölfflin discussed the exterior of buildings in terms of the arrangement of the formal elements on the surface of facades which also included interior elevations, such as staircases.²⁴ One theme of his examination is the composition and structure of wall surfaces. This means that while the architectural composition was comprehended as surface in the analysis of the positioning of columns, the psychological and bodily language which described the composition indicated another understanding of the structure, namely as a corporeal volume and mass, and, therefore, as fundamentally three-dimensional physicality and materiality, that is as space and spatiality. In notebook 12, Wölfflin wrote: "form taken from the spatial notion, view. The spatial notion adheres to all our imagination. Form means a relation between things in space".²⁵ And later, "form [as] a kind of delineation in space".²⁶ The modern concept of space in terms of spatiality, *Räumlichkeit*, emerged in Wölfflin's text in two aspects, first, in his comments on paintings and the depicted space in them²⁷, and secondly, in connection to the analysis of light effects²⁸. Wölfflin explored the conditions and the effects of depicted space and light on the subject. Schmarsow further engaged in the research of this understanding of 'space' as *Raum*.

²⁴ *Ren & Bar*, p. 42/59.

²⁵ Notebook 12 (1885/86), p. 11. "Form der räumlichen Anschauung entnommen. Die räumliche Anschauung haftet allem unsrem Vorstellen an. Form bedeutet eine Beziehung zwischen Dingen im Raum." Things in space are buildings and subjects.

²⁶ Notebook 13 (1885/86), p. 32. "Form die Art der Begrenzung im Raum".

²⁷ *Ren & Bar*, p. 20/34. Wölfflin's distinction of the "architectural spatiality, architektonische Räumlichkeit" (translated as spatial structure) of the more obscure 'Eliodoro' fresco compared to the 'School of Athens' in the Vatican stanza.

²⁸ *Ren & Bar*, p. 47/64f.

In *Baroque and Rococo* (1897), Schmarsow not only described and characterised the architecture of the art historical styles mentioned in the title, but produced a more theoretical delineation of the concept of space in a general sense, which is to a certain extent divorced from the historical particularities of the Baroque and the Rococo. In his text, Schmarsow stated that the *Raumentfaltung* (the unfolding of space) is predicated by the human subject.²⁹ *Körperbildung* (the constitution of the body) conditions the *Raumgestaltung* (the formation or arrangement of space).³⁰ Also, the conception of a building in terms of the spatial or plastic element (*plastischer Gesichtspunkt*) begins with the analogy to the human *Körpergefühl* (feeling for or of the body).³¹ The subject's *Bewegungsvorstellungen* (conception and imagination of movement) foster the introjection, *Selbstversetzung*, with which the architecture is transformed into space.³²

Schmarsow's ideas are similar to Wölfflin's. But for Schmarsow the identification of the issue of space with the subject was an issue he also argued for independently from the framework of the Baroque and the Rococo. Wölfflin, on the other hand, is mostly interested in the exploration of the characteristics of Baroque and Renaissance architecture.³³ For the historiography and the 'archaeology' of architectural theory, Schmarsow's text depicts the transition to a more general discussion of theories of space. Because Wölfflin situated and linked his examination of architecture and spatial effects so thoroughly to the styles of the Baroque and the

²⁹ Schmarsow (1897), p. 5 (in 2001 ed.).

³⁰ Schmarsow (1897), p. 7 (in 2001 ed.).

³¹ Schmarsow (1897), p. 8 (in 2001 ed.).

³² Schmarsow (1897), p. 26f (in 2001 ed.).

Renaissance, it appears that he has a limited place in the genealogy of the idea and the discourse of space as such. Accordingly, until the last quarter of the 20th century³⁴, Wölfflin's text remained confined within the discipline of art history, and particularly in the domain of Renaissance and Baroque studies (to which it does belong)³⁵, instead of being a general contribution to architectural theory. In response to this historiographical exclusion, it is crucial to stress that Wölfflin's *Habilitation*, as well as his doctoral dissertation contain interesting speculations about space. For Wölfflin, architectural spatiality is a notion prompted and indeed constituted by his presupposition of the subject.

The *Erlebnis* (lived experience) of the effect of space was seen by Wölfflin as a projection by the subject (*Einfühlung*) into the architectural object. The Baroque "dissolution of space into incommensurability was explained [in the text] from a psychological point of view that understood every object to be judged according to its relation to the body"³⁶ of the subject. Vidler noted that the psychology of perception "was posited on the basis of an aesthetics of uncertainty and movement", and also that "the modern preoccupation with space was thus founded on the understanding that the relationship between viewer and a work of art was based on a shifting 'point of view' determined by a moving body"³⁷. Wölfflin amalgamated conceptual developments within

³³ Except for the brief elucidation of these theoretical concerns with regard to empathy theory, *Ren & Bar*, p. 56/77.

³⁴ In my opinion, Gilles Deleuze's text *The Fold, Leibniz and the Baroque*, and his explicit discussion of Wölfflin, is of pivotal importance for the resurrection of Wölfflin in the recent past.

³⁵ Wölfflin and *Renaissance and Baroque* continue to be an essential element of explorations of the concept of the Baroque, and not the *Principles* of 1915, as I experienced on a recent conference 'Rethinking the Baroque' (University of York, July 2006).

³⁶ Vidler (2001), p. 90.

psychological aesthetics as they evolved in empathy theory with his historical research into the art and architecture of the Baroque. And he developed them in a very close affinity in the 1888 text. "The orientation of baroque space [directed Wölfflin] toward the perspective of the viewer"³⁸, meaning the experience and impressions of the subject. Vidler correctly observed that "spatial thought, first in art history, then in architectural history ... was deeply embedded in the emergence of the psychology of the individual" in the second half of the 19th century.³⁹ Because Wölfflin wished to explore the effects of architectural objects on the individual psyche, he was able to distinguish between the "perfect manifestation of balance, harmony, beauty, truth, [and] centeredness" of the Renaissance, and the Baroque as "a disruption, a dissemination, a falling away, a breaking apart".⁴⁰ From the theoretical discussion of architecture as effect and bodiliness in the doctoral dissertation, Wölfflin extended his ideas about architecture in the 1888 text with the notion of space and spatiality⁴¹. "It was the [historical examination of] the Baroque", Vidler wrote, "that actually triggered the sense that space wasn't the same as it was before".⁴² This means that inquiries of architectural history, and here specifically into the nature of the Baroque, stimulated new ideas in the realm of architectural theory. In short, the art historical analysis of the Baroque in Wölfflin's text is not only a categorisation of historical material, but also an exploration of the theorisation of architecture,

³⁷ Vidler (2001), p. 3.

³⁸ Rampley (2001), p. 273.

³⁹ Vidler (2006), p. 62.

⁴⁰ Vidler (2006), p. 63.

⁴¹ *Ren & Bar*, p. 17/31; where Wölfflin associates directly *körperlich*, corporeal/bodily (translated confusingly as substantial) with *räumlich*, spatial.

⁴² Vidler (2006), p. 63.

namely as spatially perceived and experienced. In the 1888 text, the field of psychology is related and intertwined with architectural theory as well as architectural history.

In order to evaluate the 1888 text, within the architectural context, I refer to Vidler's interpretation that "Wölfflinian architectonics ... [which] derived from a psychology of bodily projection", can be defined as a "perspective, [which was] translated into architecture through the late 19th century reading of the baroque ... [and which] was, in retrospect, more a fiction of the new psychology of the body than a historical account" of the Baroque.⁴³ Constructivist historiography affirms that "historical interpretations are essentially constructions in the present, not -as traditional historians would claim- reconstructions of the past".⁴⁴ Wölfflin's text is organised conceptually in a circle: in which the psychological language of *Einfühlung* (of the late 19th century) demarcates and denotes the world of Baroque (and Renaissance) architecture (of the 16th century), and, in which the effects of the form-language (*Formensprache*) and the expressions of Baroque architecture exemplify and mirror the cultural and spatial conditions of the late 19th century simultaneously.⁴⁵ In his notebook, Wölfflin noted this relation of the Baroque to the present: "art of the Baroque style, the mood of the modern subject".⁴⁶ Similarly, Wölfflin comments on the correspondence between the 19th century and the 16th century in the text: "one can hardly fail to recognise the

⁴³ Vidler (2001), p. 224; 221.

⁴⁴ Fulbrook (2002), p. 5.

⁴⁵ Without alluding directly to Wölfflin and his contexts; cf. Winters (2001), p. 521.

⁴⁶ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 34. "*Kunst des Barockstils in Italien. Die Stimmung des modernen Menschen*".

affinity that our own age in particular bears to the Italian Baroque".⁴⁷ The identification of this relation was implemented in the service of constructing historical knowledge of the past, but it also allowed a direct reference from the past with regard to the character of the present. In the 19th century, the writing of history problematised the definition, the distinction and the division between the past and the present. Historians attempted to understand the complex relationship between the present and the past. While it was understood that the present was different from the historical past, there was also the notion of an affinitive reflection upon the past, in order to establish the identity of the 19th century in terms of heritage, tradition and history.

Wölfflin's text is impregnated by ambiguity stemming from relating the historical analysis of the Baroque to reflections on the 19th century. More importantly, Wölfflin's particular account of the Baroque is generated by his theories of architecture which respond to and evolved from the 19th century discourses of psychology and aesthetics. The complexity of these issues in Wölfflin's thinking exemplifies the intricacy and convolution of the theoretical and the historical discourses of art history.

Architectural practice of the 19th century was shaped by the phenomenon of competing historical revival styles. The plurality of stylistic systems was accompanied by numerous texts which established new unities and extreme totalisations of individual styles. The comparative presentation and argumentation about

⁴⁷ *Ren & Bar*, p. 65/87.

architecture already began in the 18th century with Fischer von Erlach⁴⁸, Leroy⁴⁹ and Durand⁵⁰, for example. The comparative method became a model with "radical implications for the way architectural history was conceived".⁵¹ This method also shaped the arguments of practising architects advocating particular revival styles in the 19th century. Schwarzer observed that "within [the 19th century] architectural literature on the historical styles, the different styles were defined by their contrasts with each other ... [they] were abstracted and simplified for discursive purposes" into "bipolar oppositions" and "linked by a reliance upon the exclusionary methodologies of the natural sciences".⁵² This description fits Wölfflin and his 1888 text. The "historical styles were arrayed as competing paradigms"⁵³, which reflected between 1820 and 1850 mainly the style debate between international classicism and national medievalism⁵⁴; whereas between 1850 and 1900, the Renaissance and the Baroque revivals "became the overwhelming favourites of architects"⁵⁵. The historical narratives and theoretical discussions justified the styles of contemporary architecture.⁵⁶ These studies were attempts to seek affiliation with the past, as "sites for self-realisation"; they were "theatrical and theoretical forums for exploring issues of continuity[, difference] and change in architectural culture", as well as within historical thinking.⁵⁷ The impact of architectural practice on architectural theory and history

⁴⁸ *Entwurf einer historischen Architektur*, 1721.

⁴⁹ *Les Ruines des plus beaux monuments de la Grèce*, 1758.

⁵⁰ *Recueil et Parallèle des édifices de tout genre, anciens et modernes*, 1799.

⁵¹ Hvattum (2004), p. 117.

⁵² Schwarzer (1995a), p. 85.

⁵³ Schwarzer (1995a), p. 87.

⁵⁴ Schwarzer (1995a), p. 128.

⁵⁵ Schwarzer (1995a), p. 70f.

⁵⁶ Wölfflin's text can be identified as such a justification of the Baroque, at a time when Neo-Baroque architecture was very prominent.

resulted in the "restructuring of [the] modern identity along a set of conceptual oppositions".⁵⁸ Schwarzer showed in his extensive analysis of 19th century German architectural texts that "aside from attempts at synthetic eclecticism, the great task of the discourse had been to prove why one historical style was more appropriate for the present than all others"; he interpreted the texts by historians, theorists and critics as the "testimony to a pressing desire to legitimate contemporary existence"⁵⁹, and particularly, the contemporary architectural practice of building in traditional historical styles. The embrace of the architectural past might be seen as an escape from the crisis, the fragmentation and uncertainty in the political, economical and cultural realms of the 19th century. The styles were regarded as vehicles for ideas of order and unity, and the continuity of national traditions.⁶⁰ Hvattum noted that "the 19th century debate on style presupposed that history could be conceived of as a systematic whole, constituted by distinct and homogeneous epochs, each with a particular character and a distinct style".⁶¹ The context of historicism of the architectural practice of the 19th century significantly influenced the formulations of architectural history and theory, and Wölfflin's text.

Most of the 19th century literature on the revivals of architectural styles mentions material, technological, constructional, archaeological, political, religious and ethical explanations and

⁵⁷ Schwarzer (1995a), p. 37.

⁵⁸ Schwarzer (1995a), p. 262.

⁵⁹ Schwarzer (1995a), p. 82.

⁶⁰ One particular discourse of this narrative is exemplified in the "oppositional terminology underlying the *Gründerzeit* debate on nationalism", with regard to politics and religion between Germany and Austria. Especially after 1871, German nationalism was associated with the Renaissance, while the Austrian national identity was adhered to the Baroque. Schwarzer (1995a), p. 34f, 80, 130, 132.

⁶¹ Hvattum (2004), p. 166f.

justifications for their contemporary use and value. Wölfflin, on the other hand, presents a more innovative version, explaining the historical styles of the Baroque and the Renaissance in terms of the experience of effects. This approach was prompted and empirically enabled by the paradigmatic experience of historical styles in the contemporary architectural scene. This means that Wölfflin's theory of architecture as experience was significantly shaped by the condition of the plurality of historical styles in the 19th century. The production of architecture and the particularity of the argumentation for the revival styles in the 19th century influenced both, Wölfflin's theory of architecture and his historical account of architectural effects.

The juncture of theory, history and the practice in this context is quite intricate. Wölfflin applied his architectural theories to a defined historical problem, the emergence of the Baroque in the 16th century. But in terms of his own architectural surroundings, buildings and texts, Wölfflin's historical account of 'the Baroque vs. the Renaissance' manifests a certain allegiance to the models of reasoning prevalent in the 19th century.⁶² But the text manifests also a novel dimension in contemporary theorising about architecture, that is, in terms of the experience of space.

This interpretation consists of several layers which understand the 1888 text as a complex work enveloping different influences, various themes and conflicts within the architectural and art historical spheres. This contextualisation is intended to illustrate the contact and relation between Wölfflin's engagements in history and theory in the text.

The entanglement of concerns of history and theory demarcates Wölfflin's attitude about art history as *Wissenschaft*. In this regard, the 1888 text, in co-ordination with the archival material, can be thought as exhibiting a particular *Kunstgeschichtstheorie*, a theory of art history within the realm of *Kunstgeschichtswissenschaft* (the *Wissenschaft* of art history). The published text exemplifies the investigation into distinct historical expressions of bodily attitudes as part of the development of architecture, in the sense of a *wissenschaftliche Systematik*.⁶³ Wölfflin wrote in his notebook "model of *wissenschaftlich*-exact method"⁶⁴, which implies a certain intention and emphasis on the methodical character of the text. The methodological dimension is prominent on the same page of the notebook, when Wölfflin noted: "comparison to Renaissance into the foreground".⁶⁵ Under the heading 'The Art of the Baroque', he specified: "systematic depiction of the Baroque style"⁶⁶, and again "systematic treatment"⁶⁷. The term 'systematic' is the key here. It manifests Wölfflin's intention to position the category of the Baroque in terms of a system. This notion of system has two spheres of operation in the text: on the one hand, it pertains to the historical dimension, where the Baroque is compared to the earlier style of the Renaissance. The chronological comparison establishes the system. On the other hand, the notion of system is relevant for the theoretical field, in which the idea of system stresses the correspondence of the

⁶² Comparison and opposition.

⁶³ Cf. Cepl (2001), p. 5.

⁶⁴ Notebook 15 (1887/88), p. 17v. "*Muster wissenschaftlich-exakter Methode*"

⁶⁵ Notebook 15 (1887/88), p. 17v. "*Vergleichung von Renaissance in Vordergrund stellen.*"

⁶⁶ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 57. "*systematische Darstellung des Barockstils*".

⁶⁷ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 136. "*Systematische Behandlung*".

Baroque to the Renaissance as paradigmatic model in terms of a cultural totality and period, but also connects architectural effects to the idea of bodiliness. Furthermore, we can read in the notebook: "demand for exact work... From the individual infer, conclude the whole. Model of interpretation".⁶⁸ This entry suggests that Wölfflin is not really interested in individual architectural objects, although they are necessary as evidence and documentation. Rather, he is after the more general aspect of the architectural effects, namely their capacity to delineate a larger picture, the Baroque and the workings of history. The quotation from the archival material ends with "model of interpretation", which indicates the intended nature of the 1888 text. Wölfflin's terminology positions his text in terms of a particular pattern, that is to display and exemplify his concepts of interpretation. Earlier he stated: "capture the principles".⁶⁹ This comment presents another pivotal statement with regard to his intention and methodology. But, do these 'principles' refer to the theoretical sphere of architecture, in the link of architectural effects with bodiliness? Or to the conceptual correspondence of the Baroque with the Renaissance as period? Or to the systematic structure of the historical development and emergence of the Baroque style? Or do these 'principles' frame the interconnection between the conceptual and the historical fields? It is not clear from the notebook entry. However, the references from the archival material emphasise that Wölfflin consciously attempted to present his material in a distinct manner. When the published text is examined and the two connected dimensions of theory and history are

⁶⁸ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 94. "*Verlangen nach exaktem Arbeiten ... Vom einzelnen das Ganze erschliessen. Muster von Interpretation.*"

identified, one can return to the archival material which now suggests more clearly Wölfflin's intention to illustrate the juncture of the theoretical and the historical aspects in order to present his *wissenschaftliche* attitude.

Wölfflin further explored the methodological concept of development in the archival material. The effects of architectural objects were grouped according to the "concept of organic development".⁷⁰ In his notebook he wrote: "introduction of the philosophical method [i.e. of theoretical concepts] into [art] history: law of development".⁷¹ The description of the material (of objects and effects) was structured and formulated according to the categories of the totality of the cultural period, and the unity of the architectural style, but also with emphasis on the change, evolution and development of the composition of forms and their effects, in this case as the emergence of the Baroque. Rehm stated that "in view of natural science, Wölfflin's scholarship attempted to describe the individual example in terms of categories and general laws"⁷². The notion of development was considered as one such general law. In this regard, Wölfflin scribbled in a notebook: "history as *Wissenschaft* is the recognition of conditions of dependence"⁷³, which relates to an earlier comment: "every new idea which presses to be expressed is linked to the already existing"⁷⁴. These quotations suggest that Wölfflin's implied theory of history was based on a

⁶⁹ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 79. "*Die Prinzipien fassen.*"

⁷⁰ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 14.

⁷¹ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 148. "*Einführung der philosophischen Methode in die Geschichte: Gesetz des Entwicklung*". Cf. also noted earlier in Notebook 13 (1885/86), p. 48: "*Entwicklungsgesetz (law of development)*".

⁷² Rehm (1960), p. 14.

⁷³ Notebook 15 (1887/88), p. 21. "*Die Historie as Wissenschaft ist die Erkenntnis von Abhängigkeitsverhältnissen*".

⁷⁴ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 44. "*Jede neue Idee, die zum Ausdruck drängt, ist gebunden an bereits Vorhandenes*".

notion of development. The concept of development manifests the identity and characteristics of an object when it is compared to earlier examples, so that their differences are seen and conceived by the historian as *establishing* the change, as if the objects follow a law and as if they *necessarily* develop. The theory of development includes both, the notion of continuity which allows us to trace connections, as well as a notion of discontinuity which defines significant changes as differences and thereby locates breaks or caesuras within the historical field. Wölfflin employs this historical thinking in most of his texts.⁷⁵ In *Renaissance and Baroque*, Wölfflin argues that forms have a history in which the effects of form develop and change. With the notion of development, he considers the shift from one stylistic paradigm to another as a process, while changes of style were previously regarded as more abrupt. Wölfflin commented on the *Formengeschichte* in a notebook: "forms influence and are influenced. Apparently they have a law of life in themselves".⁷⁶ But Wölfflin does not believe in a complete autonomy of forms. He doubts the theory of jaded and blunted sensibilities according to which forms change because people get used and tired of them. The psychological theory which Wölfflin favours presupposes that architectural forms are the expression of bodiliness. It seems then, that it is bodiliness and the attitudes about the body which change through time. In the text, Wölfflin traces the development, and, thereby, the historicity of bodiliness, as it is

⁷⁵ For instance, the text on the early works by Michelangelo (1891), where the emergence of the mature style is traced in the early works; the 1893 article on the development of Roman triumphal arches; and very pronounced in *Classic Art* (1899), where the High Renaissance is examined with reference to tendencies and trends evolving in the, what we call today, Protorenaissance.

⁷⁶ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 174. "Formen beeinflussen und werden beeinflusst. Offenbar haben sie ein Lebensgesetz für sich."

articulated in the comparison between the Baroque and the Renaissance.

With the methodological comment that "one can compare every thing with everything else"⁷⁷, Wölfflin defines strategically the mechanism of employing the characteristics and forms of the Renaissance in his delineation of the Baroque. The earlier (Renaissance) effects of architectural forms are necessary to manifest and capture the identity of the Baroque in terms of the *Entwicklungsgedanke*, the idea of development, in the emergence of the Baroque. But the development from the Renaissance to the Baroque as such is not a necessary change. The notion of development is an analytical mechanism with which the identity of the Baroque is cultivated and exhibited.

The *wissenschaftliche Gesetzeserkenntnis*, the recognition of laws and principles, portrayed art history as a discipline belonging to the academic domain of the *Gesetzeswissenschaften*.⁷⁸ The implications of the *wissenschaftliche* methodology, in the integration of conceptual and historical elements with the more obvious empirical aspects of psychological ideas and the analysis and comparison of forms in details and examples, can be identified as Wölfflin's positioning of himself within the institutional discourse and the discipline of art history. By comparing the Baroque to the Renaissance, he historicised and differentiated the conceptions of bodiliness of subject and object which pertain to these two styles

⁷⁷ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 76. "Man kann jedes Ding mit jedem anderen vergleichen",

⁷⁸ Dittmann (1967), p. 44. These *Wissenschaften* are based on principles and laws; the term alludes to the typical characterisation and status of the natural sciences.

and periods, and thereby psychologised the notion of architectural form throughout history. This extensive blend of theoretical and historical concerns possibly reflects Wölfflin's attempt to capture the "Gesetz des inneren Lebens der Kunst, the law or principle of the inner life of art", which he mentioned as the "Endzweck (final purpose) of art history" in his foreword to the first edition of the text.⁷⁹ But it is never clearly expressed. Only by examining the text in coordination with the notebooks do the two spheres of theory and history, and their fundamental entanglement, affinity and rapport become visible as the elaboration of a distinct attitude to the methodological practice and status of the discipline of art history. The text is problematic with regard to the nature of the relation of these two fields simply because Wölfflin did not present the 1888 text as such an inquiry. Renaissance and Baroque appears to be mainly a historical analysis of 16th century architecture. As such, the text had been superseded by new research within decades. But the 1888 publication is more than a passing historical interpretation. It is a complex blend of concerns: architecture, effects and space, the body and the subject, art history as *Wissenschaft*, theory and history. The text functions as a case study not only of the various fields, but, more importantly, of their complex interconnections which are emblematic of Wölfflin's ideas. In this regard, Renaissance and Baroque continues to be a significant work for scholars who recognise Wölfflin's conceptual implications and speculations in the text.

⁷⁹ Ren & Bar, p. v/not translated in the English edition.

Some historians, on the other hand, overemphasise the theoretical dimension and accordingly criticise the text for not being historical enough, that is for "fail[ing] to offer an adequate *historical* explanation of the difference" between the Renaissance and the Baroque.⁸⁰ 'Historical' refers here to the traditional art historical conception of biographical, but also political and social history, as the explanatory background. Of course, this is precisely what Wölfflin did *not* want to do. He did *not* want to construct a history as pertaining to events, dates or individuals. Wölfflin is aiming to present another kind of history-writing. He wants to approach the architecture of a particular time in terms of the forms and the effects on observers. This involves a set of particular theoretical presuppositions: architecture as experience of form and as space. One of the main issues for Wölfflin was the history of form. He gave what he considered 'historical' evidence, in the sense of examples and details of works, and references to architects and artists of the period. He made definite 'historical' judgements and interpretations in describing and characterising architectural objects from the past, here Rome in the 16th century. But Wölfflin concentrates on architecture in terms of its bodiliness and spatial effects on the subject in order to understand its *formal* situatedness and identity within a defined frame of history. With reference to the notion of *Erlebnis*, lived experience, Wölfflin presents the historical past of objects, as form and effect which can be experienced in the present. The criticism that the text is not historical, is hardly valid since the architectural forms of the past are indeed explored and

⁸⁰ Rampley (2001), p. 271. Emphasis by Rampley.

interpreted. It is just a different sort of history that Wölfflin is after: it is *Stilgeschichte*, the history of style, and *Formengeschichte*, the history of forms.⁸¹ But here *Stil*- and *Formengeschichte* are not about the mere appearance and shapes of objects. Wölfflin investigates a particular kind of the history of style and form, that is, he concentrates on the experience of form and the effects of form on the subject.

The 1888 text belongs to the history of the *Verwissenschaftlichung* ('scientification') and *Wissenschaftswerdung* (the becoming, emerging as *Wissenschaft*) of the discipline of art history. For the late 19th century generation of art historians it was necessary that the concepts, approaches and methods with which to categorise the material of history, had to be based upon theoretical explorations. When art history emerged as academic discipline in the late 19th century, scholars had to reflect on the conceptual identity and foundation of their approaches because they intended to work in the realm of *Wissenschaft*, as it was constituted and practised by the natural sciences. They constructed and introduced concepts and methods to facilitate the 'exact' status of their scholarship. The essential task of a theory of art history was, for instance, for Hedicke, to work out "how art history should be written"⁸². This implicit demand for a theoretical foundation suggests why the issue of methodology was such a pivotal characteristic of German art history in the late 19th and early 20th century. Kultermann's text, *The History of Art History*, epitomises the continuing

⁸¹ Ren & Bar, p. 3/17.

⁸² Hedicke (1924), p. 262. "wie künftig Kunstgeschichte geschrieben werden soll".

Methodendiskussion in the German discourse, the on-going debate which started with the 1871 *Holbein-Streit*⁸³ and at the first conference of art historians in Vienna in 1873⁸⁴.

The discussion of methods and approaches is an intrinsic part of German scholarship and the conception of art history as an academic discipline, as exemplified in a number of specialised texts.⁸⁵ Historiographically, the continuous and permanent argumentation and discourse of methodology and the theoretical discussion of various approaches and concepts implies an unspoken relativity⁸⁶, the conflict and inherent contradictions within the multiplicity of methods and theories of the discipline of art history.

This conceptual discourse of the discipline struggled with one great problem: how to combine and affiliate the concept of art as it was defined by Kant, essentially as an experience, with the concept of history as it was developed by Hegel.⁸⁷ In this regard, the entire discipline of art history presents a paradox or even an oxymoron. Art pertains to the realm of experience located in the present, while history is a historicised account of being and of experience. Art and aesthetics belong to a different register than history. In order to bring

⁸³ The *Holbein-Streit* of 1871 was the heated debate between artists and art historians in Dresden about the authority to ascertain the authenticity of two paintings by Holbein.

⁸⁴ At the first *kunstwissenschaftlicher Kongress* in 1873 it became obvious that universal histories were more and more impossible to produce by individual scholars due to the increased analysis of primary sources and publication of secondary literature, and the participants called for a combined, organised and collective specialisation of research. This forum also included debates about methodology and the theoretical aspects of different approaches.

⁸⁵ Among them are Tietze's *Die Methoden der Kunstgeschichte* (1913), *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Methoden der Kunstgeschichte* (1917) by Heidrich, Hedicke's *Methodenlehre der Kunstgeschichte* (1924), and *Die Methoden der Kunstgeschichte* (1924) by Coellen.

⁸⁶ Although the individual advocates of the diverse methods saw, of course, their own approach as the most relevant aspect of the project of art history.

⁸⁷ This is, of course, a simplification of the problem. There are many more thinkers and theories involved in this discursive issue. But in order to make comments in relation and with immediate relevance for Wölfflin and his 1888 text, this art historical conflict will be radically simplified and reduced.

them together, 19th century German art historians, among them Wölfflin, historicised Kant's notion and restricted Hegel's concept of the teleology of history. This led Wölfflin to the notion that 'form has a history'. This is, of course, not an answer, but presents a question: how to maintain the idea of a certain unity and identity of a culture at a particular time in respect to changing artistic production? Wölfflin's solution, the concept of the body, was based upon his primary concern for the subject. He attempted to transfer his apriori assumption of the subject's continuity of the body to the idea of unity of a culture. While the body of the subject can be interpreted as a continuous factor through history, it is, at the same time, fundamentally bound to the present (time, culture, identity) of each individual subject and therefore discontinuous. Wölfflin's solution, the implication of both, the continuity and discontinuity of the body, presents precisely one of the most significant problems of the text. The two dimensions of the body belong to two different but connected properties of the notion and identity of the subject. One pertains to the bodily organisation, mechanism and physicality of the subject at a particular time, while the other implies the historicity of the subject's bodiliness across time. This problematic dualism in Wölfflin's argument is symptomatic of art history in general: whether to concentrate on particulars (artists or works), or whether to reflect on wider dimensions (regions, countries or periods). The tensions between Wölfflin's conceptions of the subject in relation to art and to history are irresolvable; they illustrate the intellectual condition of art history. This analysis of Wölfflin's text, which exposes his problems and conflicting intentions, was done to provoke the recognition that art history was founded and still consists in this contrasting link

between an aesthetic definition of art together with an account of its historical dimension. Renaissance and Baroque illustrates some of the historiographical conditions and attitudes, intentions and problems of the discipline in general.

A catalyst or a tangible event can be identified which stimulated the exploration and the examination of the Baroque by Wölfflin at this time.⁸⁸ This was the arrival of the Greek Pergamon altar⁸⁹ in Berlin starting in 1879.⁹⁰ The figural sculptures of the altar structure were executed in pronounced contrast to typical classical Greek sculptural depictions. These sculptures put art history and archaeology into shock and ignited the imagination of scholars. The rupture of aesthetic understanding prompted by the Pergamon sculptures seems to have had a similar impact to the discovery of the Laokoon group in the 16th century. The Pergamon altar provoked a redefinition of the canon, the aesthetics and the history of Greek sculpture. Without the critical intensity of the debates surrounding the Pergamon altar, Wölfflin's 1888 text seems unthinkable. Scholarship had to rethink the previously assumed unity of Greek sculpture. Wölfflin's exploration of the Baroque paralleled this (re)conception of unity, in the sense that he attempted to establish a uniform notion of the Baroque.

Within art history, the notion of style is another term for unity. Wölfflin employs the term '*Barockstil*', 'Baroque style' as a category of unity and generality. The Baroque is mimicking the Renaissance in

⁸⁸ The issue was brought to my attention by Alicia Payne in her presentation at the conference 'Rethinking the Baroque', at the University of York, July 2006.

⁸⁹ Wölfflin mentions the 'Pergamonian Gigantomachy' in the text, Ren & Bar, p. 21/36.

⁹⁰ Wölfflin studied two semesters at the University of Berlin in 1885. Lurz (1981), p. 53.

terms of a paradigm of a cultural totality and a model for periodisation. In this respect, Wölfflin constructs the Baroque as a stylistic constellation and periodic synthesis which, in Brunn's words, "grasps the spirit of the whole"⁹¹. "Style was the unifying fingerprint of the epoch".⁹² The concept of style is employed to establish the totality and unity of the cultural period of the Baroque. In the 1888 text, Wölfflin used the concept of style to structure his historical investigation. Schapiro noted that "for the synthesising historian of culture or the philosopher of history, style is a manifestation of the culture as a whole, the visible sign of its unity".⁹³ The notion of style in Wölfflin's text enveloped individual objects and abstracted types of effects⁹⁴. Particular examples are grouped into a more general format; style represents the factor of unity among the diversity of objects of art and architecture.⁹⁵

For Wölfflin, the aspects of unity within the art historical category of style indicated the formulation of a *Gesetz der Geschichte*, a law of history. Within the coherence of history, the succession of styles (*das Nacheinander der Stile*) was analysed in order to formulate laws of change and development.⁹⁶ Style was a constructed *Begriff*, concept, and functioned as an ideal type according to which the historical material and artefacts could be classified and quasi 'lawfully' categorised.⁹⁷ This notion of style described not a reality but a potentiality which is realised in the objects of art and architecture. The focus on "anonymous 'laws' of

⁹¹ Brunn (1898), p. viii.

⁹² Hvattum (2004), p. 167.

⁹³ Schapiro (1953), p. 52 (of 1994 publication).

⁹⁴ Cf. Wölfflin's four main characteristics of the Baroque: painterliness, grand style, massiveness and movement.

⁹⁵ Belting (2003), p. 138.

⁹⁶ Strich (1956), p. 18.

style and its evolution" worked within the "new axiom of history as an explanatory paradigm" which allowed "to understand the changes in art as an index of the temporality of history".⁹⁸ Löwith mentioned the task of the 19th century philosophy of history to discover the principle which penetrates all change.⁹⁹ Wölfflin answered this demand by proposing the body as aspect of continuity in the *Prolegomena*, as well as in *Renaissance and Baroque*. The continuity of the body and the stability of the identification and characterisation of a style established a recognition that apart from diversity and change, aesthetic values arose within the concrete setting of a historical situation. For Wölfflin, the Baroque and the Renaissance styles each demarcated a conceptual continuity, "each possessed an inner structure, a character, and each [was] in constant metamorphosis in accord with its own internal principles of development"¹⁰⁰. The differentiation of 'the Baroque vs. the Renaissance' in the text constructed history as a systematic structure of ideal identity and development which were manifested in the rhetorical description of the objects. Style as a historical system registers change and discontinuity, but is itself treated as a pattern of continuity. The problems mentioned earlier in regard to the multiple and conflicting conceptions of the body also pertain to the notion of style.

The concept of style had various functions in German art historical discourse in the late 19th century. Schwartz observed that this notion served "double duty", as "a category by which the past

⁹⁷ Dittmann (1967), p. 229.

⁹⁸ Belting (2003), p. 137.

⁹⁹ Löwith (1981), p. 236.

¹⁰⁰ Iggers (1968), p. 5.

was understood, but also [as] one through which a particularly modern problem was represented and analysed".¹⁰¹ Any pre-19th century historical "style is linked, and linked of necessity, to unity and unification"¹⁰², because the 'modern problem' encapsulated the revival, the eclectic use, the simultaneity and the plurality of historical styles in contemporary architectural practice. The quick succession of historical styles in architecture throughout the 19th century indicated the idea of fashion, and exemplified the instability of taste, "certainly in comparison with what seemed to be the centuries-long development of styles in the historical past".¹⁰³ In this sense, the opposition between style and fashion is reflected in Wölfflin's two theories of change.¹⁰⁴ The theory of blunted sensibilities implies the necessity of 'the new' and of fashion ("fashion -now as temporal marker- appears as change"¹⁰⁵), while the psychological theory, based on bodiliness, manifests the totality, unity and continuity of style. In the 19th century, style incorporated a "self-avowed conception of break and thus of crisis"¹⁰⁶, which led to the identification of historicist styles with fashion. Historians who were concerned with eras prior to the 19th century, idealised this past in terms of style while, at the same time, they reflected negatively on their present crisis, which illustrated a fundamental break with the past. The idea of an historical "style is a unifying principle which delineates the total configuration of a period".¹⁰⁷ For Wölfflin the Baroque was such a totality in opposition to the 19th century's

¹⁰¹ Schwartz (2005), p. 1.

¹⁰² Benjamin, Andrew (2006), p. 53.

¹⁰³ Schwartz (2005), p. 12.

¹⁰⁴ Style and fashion were explored before in the discussion of the relation of architecture to clothing in the *Prolegomena*.

¹⁰⁵ Benjamin, Andrew (2006), p. 26.

¹⁰⁶ Benjamin, Andrew (2006), p. 49.

multiplicity and simultaneity of styles, the fragmentation of culture, and the doubts about its own identity and unity as a period. With respect to this 'crisis of modernity', art historical scholarship operated in terms of a "wilful transformation of [these] fleeting fashion[s] into stable style[s]".¹⁰⁸ Wölfflin's thinking needs to be seen in this context. In a preface to early editions of the *Principles*, he describes the condition out of which he developed his notion of style: "Nothing marks so clearly the *opposition* between the art of the *past* and the art of *today* as the *unity* of visual forms *then* and the *multiplicity* of visual forms *now*".¹⁰⁹ He attempted to rescue the concept of style from its problems within the contemporary sphere of the loss of authenticity, fragmentation and multiplicity. In contradiction to the visual multiplicity of Wölfflin's own time, he argued -somewhat nostalgically- in the 1888 text for the visual uniformity and cultural unity of the Baroque.

The identity of the agency of the past is conceived as knowledge through the subject, and, more precisely, through the unifying notion of the body and bodiliness, *körperliches Dasein*. Wölfflin writes in the text that "a style can only emerge where a strong feeling for a certain way of *körperliches* (bodily) *Dasein* exists".¹¹⁰ He then comments that "this feeling is missing in our time completely".¹¹¹ The *Grundstimmung*, the basic mood was not judged as being uniform in the 19th century; therefore the visual arts depict various different *Lebensgefühle*, feelings for life which cannot

¹⁰⁷ Friedrich (1955), p. 151.

¹⁰⁸ Schwartz (2005), p. 25.

¹⁰⁹ Schwartz (2005), p. 20. My emphasis. Schwartz appears to have taken this quote from the 3rd edition of the *Principles* from 1918, p. ix. He informs us that this section of the preface was taken out in later editions.

¹¹⁰ *Ren & Bar*, p. 57/78.

¹¹¹ *Ren & Bar*, p. 57/78. "Unserer Zeit fehlt diese Gefühl gänzlich".

be generalised into one style. Strich noted that in Wölfflin's time there was no longer a "uniform and binding style", and that he wanted to overcome the multiplicity of styles.¹¹² The affirmation of the discontinuity between the Baroque and the Renaissance becomes the affirmation of modernity's fundamental break with the past. Therefore Wölfflin's arguments about the unity of historical styles were not a denial, but the critique of the modern multiplicity, simultaneity and fashionability of historical styles, since they were occasioned by this profusion of styles.¹¹³ Wölfflin summarised this idea later in the *Principles*, stating that "not everything is possible at all times"¹¹⁴, again implying his contempt with the surrounding architectural scene. The 1888 text, Meier argued, is a call to order and organise history precisely in view of the stylistic pluralism of the 19th century.¹¹⁵ The need for a unified historical account (*Geschichtsbedürfnis*) is a consequence of the dispersal and apparent loss of tradition (*Traditionsverlust*). Wölfflin's construction of the notion of the Baroque style in the text is a discursive attempt to regain unity, to foil and overcome the fractures of 19th century culture.

At the same time, this is the moment when the notion of style passes from a normative to a descriptive characterisation of art and architecture as historical entities. The co-presence of both dimensions¹¹⁶ sets up further tensions in the text, which resulted in

¹¹² Strich (1956), p. 16f.

¹¹³ Benjamin, Andrew (2006), p. xiv.

¹¹⁴ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 7 (preface to 6th ed.), 22; *Principles*, p. 11. "Nicht alles ist zu allen Zeiten möglich".

¹¹⁵ Meier (1990), p. 73.

¹¹⁶ Wölfflin attempted to produce not a truly neutral but rather a balanced description with his positive and negative characterisations of the Baroque and the Renaissance. As such, he works partly within but also, at the same time, against the traditional normative and privileging account of the Renaissance.

very different interpretations of Wölfflin's attitudes. Gombrich exemplifies the view that Wölfflin is postulating the privileging of the Renaissance and the classical over the Baroque.¹¹⁷ I proposed the argument, in the previous part of the chapter, that Wölfflin did so, but unconsciously, in the formulation of the comparison with the Renaissance; and that he consciously intended to rehabilitate and emancipate the Baroque¹¹⁸ as style and period, precisely from the privileging of the Renaissance. The concept of style involved a number of associations, making it a significant aspect for the argument about the conflicts and problems of the 1888 text and the discipline of art history.

Wölfflin's focus on empirical objects and their bodily dimension, and his attempt to rationalise why and how exactly the changes of the effects of form from one style to another happened, were part of a new definition of the conventional term of style, constituting new paradigms for art historical scholarship and knowledge. This approach was based on the realisation that interpretation, Dilthey's *verstehen*, understanding, by the subject was a real element of the scholarly account of the historical material. In emphasising this aspect of interpretation, the pivotal position of the subject is indicated. The subject constitutes the engagement with and the reception of an object, while at the same time also being the producer and the addressee of the *Wissenschaft der Geschichtsbetrachtung und der Geschichtskonstruktion*, of the vision and the construction of history. And although we today contest and

¹¹⁷ Gombrich (1985). Similarly and quite recently, Weiss argued also for the norm of the Renaissance in Wölfflin's theory and thinking. Weiss (1996), p. 79.

¹¹⁸ The Baroque was named during the subsequent stylistic period of Neoclassicism, when the preceding style was unpopular. This means the notion of the Baroque had

highlight problems of the combination of philosophical, aesthetic and historical categories, it appeared relevant for Wölfflin and his time to identify and combine the *Seinsaussage* (a statement of being) of subject and object, on the basis of the *Erlebnis*, the experience, the identification and the understanding of an object by the subject, with the historical sphere of analysis and interpretation. In *Renaissance and Baroque* Wölfflin conceived 'style' as index of the psychological worldview of bodiliness, leading to the comprehension of the object as reflected upon by the bodily existence of the subject.¹¹⁹ "Style reflects or projects the 'inner form' of collective thinking and feeling", as Schapiro noted.¹²⁰ Schapiro's formulation illustrates a prevalent aspect of this interpretation of Wölfflin's text. The notion of style which Wölfflin projected onto the Baroque and the Renaissance functioned as a *reflection* on his own situation in the 19th century, in terms of cultural pluralism and crisis, as well as with respect to the contemporary art historical demarcation of the theoretical conceptions and methodological approaches within the scholarship. The crisis between history and 19th century existence fostered and created the concentration and transmission of theoretical concepts of how to engage with the past from the perspective of the present. As such, *Renaissance and Baroque* portrays Wölfflin's theory of art historical thinking relating the past and the present.

Wölfflin's use of the term style has implications beyond the initial definition of architectural effects, which make this notion an

from the beginning negative connotations as theoretical concept which Wölfflin attempted to transform into a more positive and balanced description.

¹¹⁹ Schade (1963), p. 97.

¹²⁰ Schapiro (1953), p. 52 (of 1994 publication). My emphasis.

ambiguous aspect of the text. The intellectual context of Renaissance and Baroque is embedded in the historicism in which the concept of history interlocks various theoretical fields.¹²¹ The connections of the present with the past, and of the past with the present, reflect 19th century concerns for the writing but also for the thinking of history.

The *Kunstgeschichtstheorie*, theory of art history, which is exemplified in Wölfflin's thought, is marked by the impact of the philosophy of history, the *Geschichtsphilosophie* of Hegel.¹²² Hegel's ideas which influenced the field of philosophical and theoretical historicism had an extraordinary effect and influence on German art history and Wölfflin's 1888 text. Wölfflin's conception of history as development mirrors Hegel's theory based on the dialectics of becoming¹²³, including "the notion of reality as a developing, dynamic process"¹²⁴. Hegel's dialectic presents a "peculiar logic of history".¹²⁵ Ferguson added that

in its simplest form the dialectic serves to lend an apparent clarity to the interaction of traditions and cultural tendencies ... to assume a causal relation between the full development of one tradition, the resultant rise and completion of its opposite, and the ensuing amalgamation of what was most permanent in both to form a new and 'higher' tradition.¹²⁶

¹²¹ The theory of the subject, of experience and of the body, the theory of architecture and space, the theory of history, of history-writing and of art historical analysis and methodology.

¹²² Dittmann (1967), p. 10. Note that in view of the vastness and intricacy of Hegel's conception of history (not to mention the multiple versions of the application of his thought throughout the 19th century, or the interpretations in the 20th century) only relevant aspects indicative and relevant for Wölfflin's text will be presented in the following paragraphs. The references to Hegel's ideas are mostly taken from secondary sources to manifest the extensive Hegelian appropriation and the particularly art historical take on Hegel within the theoretical discourse of art history.

¹²³ Dittmann (1967), p. 227.

¹²⁴ Gardiner (1959), p. 59.

¹²⁵ Ferguson (1948), p. 170f.

¹²⁶ Ferguson (1948), p. 171.

Wölfflin contested the teleological notion of the Hegelian conception of development as progress. But the working of the dialectic remained an important model for the characterisation of the Baroque as the opposite, the antithesis of the Renaissance. For Wölfflin, however, not every new style is the opposite of the previous style. In contrast to Hegel's general theory of 'thesis - antithesis - synthesis', Wölfflin's theme of the dialectic opposition (Baroque vs. Renaissance) is a limited appropriation¹²⁷ and a rather special case in the history of style, which only has appeared in similar terms in antiquity.¹²⁸

Hegel's "concept of style was historically oriented from the start; ... the works of art (as carriers of the style, *Träger des Stils*) were taken as products and effects (*als Wirkendes*)".¹²⁹ Wölfflin mirrors Hegel's notion of an object, particularly with regard to architecture, in terms of its effects in the Prolegomena and in Renaissance and Baroque. In these texts, Wölfflin conceived of an architectural style as a unity within the continued development of art and architecture. He inherited from Hegel the idea of the fundamental situatedness and the historicity of objects and subjects within this development. For Hegel, the nature (*das Wesen*) of an object (or a subject) acquires meaning and identity as part and parcel of the process of history; character is defined by the status, the function or the role an object (or a subject) plays in the historical network and evolution.¹³⁰ This means the characteristics of the identity of the Baroque become

¹²⁷ The notion of 'synthesis' is not included in Wölfflin's abstract model of the opposition between the styles of the Baroque and the Renaissance.

¹²⁸ Cf. Wölfflin's comment in the foreword to his 1888 edition, where he mentions that he initially wanted to include references to a Baroque style in antiquity, but which he left out at the very last minute (Ren & Bar, p. v / not translated).

¹²⁹ Piel (1963), p. 20f.

¹³⁰ Löwith (1981), p. 139.

apparent in view of the process of history, which triggered the comparison with the Renaissance. The analysis of individual objects is based upon a focus on their historical identity within a continuing evolution through time, for Hegel, as for Wölfflin. For Hegel, "history develops in determinate phases, each phase being intimately connected with the preceding one".¹³¹ The idea of connected historical sequences was significant for Wölfflin. The nature of the Baroque is dependent on its relation to the Renaissance. Consequently for Wölfflin, a work of art or architecture cannot be interpreted by itself. An object has to be understood in terms of its nature (*Wesen*) as an artistic appearance (*Kunsterscheinung*) associated with the positions *within* the change and the continuity of history¹³², that is, in relation (as similarities or differences) to an earlier object. The Baroque is, therefore, examined in its historical position, that is, in its chronological connection to the Renaissance.

Piel acknowledged that the individual *Kunstwerk* had aesthetic meaning only in regard to its historical effectiveness (*Wirksamkeit*) in Hegel's view, and with this represents "an aestheticisation of history, *eine Ästhetisierung des Historischen*".¹³³ The historicised object -for Hegel all art is historical- is in need of an interpretation (in order to be understood properly) in view of this historical dimension. Wölfflin's text can be paraphrased in a similar way: the forms (of architecture) are aestheticised in the sense of a psychological *Einfühlung*, in which the aesthetic experience, the *Erlebnis*, of the corporeality of forms from the past, allows the subject to introject meaning, to perceive and conceive the identity of the

¹³¹ Gardiner (1959), p. 60.

¹³² Piel (1963), p. 33.

forms, to interpret them as they are experienced by the subject in the present. Wölfflin's thought process sometimes resembles Hegel's, but the actual technique and emphasis of the historical knowledge is quite different. Hegel advocated the content (of the *Geist*, spirit) over the form of art, resulting in a *Gehaltsästhetik* (aesthetics of content), while Wölfflin posited a *Formästhetik* (aesthetics of form).¹³⁴ Although Hegel and Wölfflin stressed different areas, they both historicised art and architectural objects. This historicisation of objects results, on the one hand, in their aestheticisation (*Ästhetisierung*) by the subject, and, on the other hand, in the categorisation and formalisation (*Formalisierung*) of history and of the objects themselves. The identification of the aesthetic and the historical judgement and interpretation, leads to the systematisation of a *Kunstgeschichtswissenschaft*, a *Wissenschaft* of art history.¹³⁵ As Wölfflin belittles colleagues¹³⁶ who merely attempt to write *Künstlergeschichte*, the history of artists, and to create collections of data and information, to ascertain chronologies¹³⁷, he positions himself within an alternative framework. He conceptualised his psychological construction of style, as *Stilgeschichte* of bodiliness, as an idealised model, pattern or system which is materialised and traced in the concrete artefacts from the past.

Hegel saw change as aspect within the diachronic process, by which a field (considered as a chaos of change) could be comprehended as a process of development.¹³⁸ Wölfflin also depicted stylistic compartmentalisation as an ordering device of the

¹³³ Piel (1963), p. 27.

¹³⁴ Dittmann (1967), p. 30.

¹³⁵ Dittmann (1967), p. 218.

¹³⁶ Cf. foreword to the 1888 edition of *Ren & Bar*.

¹³⁷ Cf. *Prolegomena*, p. 41/184.

chaos of the historical material. For Wölfflin, the application of the notions of style and bodiliness to the articulations of form in art and architecture resulted in the conception of the identity of the effect of the form as an historical entity. In relation to the German Idealistic tradition, in which history was seen as a process, the history of form in Wölfflin's text emerged in terms of *Entwicklungsgeschichte*, evolutionary history, history as development.¹³⁹ For Karl Mannheim, echoing Hegel, the *Entwicklungsgegedanke*, the thinking of evolution, meant that history was not just chaotic change, but that change could be grasped according to a principle of order, in order to comprehend the inner structure of all change.¹⁴⁰ The concept of development (*Entwicklungsbegriff*) emerged in the 18th century, in the natural sciences¹⁴¹, as Heussi noted, and became one of the most common and most used notions in 19th century historical scholarship.¹⁴² Evolution is a category constituted or thought (*gedacht*) by the historian, who constructs a sequence (*Reihe*), in which objects are not considered in isolation, but rather with immediate connection to earlier and later objects.¹⁴³ The principle of evolution is a *Leitmotiv* in periodisation and the co-ordination of relevant historical divisions.¹⁴⁴ Form as style and bodiliness was understood as expression of a time and culture, and could be registered as a link (*Glied*) within a *universalgeschichtliche Gesamtentwicklung*, a universal-historical total development.¹⁴⁵

¹³⁸ White (1975), p. 106.

¹³⁹ Iggers (1968), p. 143; 135.

¹⁴⁰ Heussi (1932), p. 15.

¹⁴¹ The idea was further developed by Darwin in the 19th century.

¹⁴² Heussi (1932), p. 78.

¹⁴³ Heussi (1932), p. 84. This is an essential methodological aspect of Wölfflin's theories; cf. the Baroque vs. the Renaissance in the 1888 text, also the high Renaissance vs. the early Renaissance in *Classic Art* (1899).

¹⁴⁴ Weisbach (1957), p. 15.

¹⁴⁵ Hermand (1965), p. 1.

Cultural development and progression, in Hegel's philosophy of history, acted as the articulation and emergence of the Absolute spirit. Wölfflin's configuration of objects as expressions of the *Zeitgeist*¹⁴⁶, connote back to Hegel's *Geschichtsphilosophie*, however, without the teleological dimension of the Absolute. Wölfflin regarded the style and bodiliness of an age as synonymous with the spirit of the age. "The *Zeitgeist* explained the *Zeitstil*", the style of the time.¹⁴⁷ Belting explained that "when styles in art were equated with styles of thinking or styles of life, the analysis of art's historical shape was celebrated as an all-explaining manner of narrating history"; thereby "art history appeared as a master narrative for explaining history as well".¹⁴⁸ The 'Geist' in the term *Zeitgeist* was transformed to some degree by Dilthey's conception of *Geisteswissenschaften* into the more general cultural motif of *Weltanschauung* (world view). Hegel's *Geist* was no longer solely understood as the timeless, eternal Absolute. The concept indicated, at the end of the 19th century, a mirror of the time(s), in the sense of the *Lebensauffassung* (philosophy of life).¹⁴⁹ The term *Zeitgeist* is a constituent of the German art historical discipline; Coellen exemplified this in 1927, writing: "that art is the expression of the *Geistigkeit* (mentality, world view) of the artist and his time, that is self-evident

¹⁴⁶ Wölfflin does **not** employ the term *Zeitgeist* as reference to Hegel's concept of *Geist* in terms of the Absolute (as God or human reason or freedom), but rather as general description of the *Stimmung*, temper or mood of the age, and the visual *Weltanschauung* (world view) which influence and direct the cultural expressions and bodily attitudes of a group or community.

¹⁴⁷ Belting (2003), p. 138.

¹⁴⁸ Belting (2003), p. 138. Burckhardt's definition and description of the Renaissance fundamentally predicated this idea. The variety of political and social aspects he related and connected to the cultural fields, and particularly the arts, made an illustration of the period only, for instance, in terms of paintings or architecture possible.

¹⁴⁹ Löwith (1981), p. 76.

(*selbstverständlich*)"¹⁵⁰. The notion of *Zeitgeist* was of similar importance to Warburg. "The work of art [was] conceived [by Warburg] as a reflection of the life of the period and its needs", as "spirit of the civilisation".¹⁵¹ But while for Warburg (and later Panofsky) this meant "to track down the customs, circumstances, and ideas [or texts] that engendered"¹⁵² the work of art iconologically, Wölfflin, on the other hand, attempted to capture the *Zeitgeist* in the bodily forms of the objects and their effects on the subject.

Hegel wanted to "explicate the principles by which the development of mankind through history can be comprehended"¹⁵³, producing a theory of cultural history¹⁵⁴ and of the human subject. A similar intention is exemplified in Wölfflin's conception of an anthropological *Kulturgeschichte*. In the *Prolegomena*, the body of the subject¹⁵⁵ is the interface between (architectural) form and human identity; and in *Renaissance and Baroque*, bodiliness and spatiality are principles to explore and comprehend architecture through the human subject. Hegel's notion of *Geist* can be understood, within the anthropological dimension, as the "general sphere of humanity" (*Menschheit*)¹⁵⁶, which was reiterated by Schapiro when he wrote that "art is now [in the late 19th and early 20th centuries] one of the strongest evidences of the *basic unity* of

¹⁵⁰ Coellen (1927), p. 375.

¹⁵¹ Ferretti (1989), p. 15.

¹⁵² Ferretti (1989), p. 15.

¹⁵³ White (1975), p. 111. Emphasis by White.

¹⁵⁴ Steadman (1990), p. 104.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. White (1975), p. 113 (emphasis by White), on Hegel's view that "physical nature as such has no beginning, middle, or end; it is always and eternally what it has to be", which could be equated with Wölfflin's notion and instrumental aspect of the human body, as remaining the same throughout time, as that which connects us to the past and allows us access to it.

¹⁵⁶ Löwith (1981), p. 220.

mankind".¹⁵⁷ In this sense, "history [as analysis and writing] is the answer of historicism to the question of the human subject about itself".¹⁵⁸ Bauer explained that the term 'historical' (*geschichtlich*) signified, apart from an empirical meaning, an observation from the point of view of the human subject (*des Menschen*).¹⁵⁹ The philosophical theory of the human subject refers back to Kant's anthropology, and his fourth question: "*Was ist der Mensch?*" (What is the human subject?). Dilthey's philosophical and hermeneutic concept of *Geschichtlichkeit* (historicity) was constructed with view to its anthropological meaning. It was based on the experience, the *Erlebnis*, life (*Leben, Lebendigkeit*), and the reality of the subject, and thereby positioned against the abstract theory of the human subject as developed in the natural sciences, for example in biology.¹⁶⁰ For Dilthey, the exterior conditions of the subject, society and historicity, and the interior conditions of consciousness and self-consciousness mark the continuity through time and across cultures. This link (Dilthey's *Zusammenhang*), as Bauer observed, cannot be neutralised; one can only become aware of this situation.¹⁶¹ For Simmel, this human awareness is extended in that he regarded history as made and constructed by the history-writing subject. Dilthey and Simmel represent the continuation and expansion of Hegelian concerns, which also form part of the intellectual context for Wölfflin.

¹⁵⁷ Schapiro (1953), p. 58 (of 1994 publication) My emphasis.

¹⁵⁸ Rüsen (1984), p. 127. "*die Frage des Menschen nach sich selbst*".

¹⁵⁹ Bauer, Gerhard (1963), p. 32.

¹⁶⁰ Bauer, Gerhard (1963), p. 39; 40; 42; 60.

¹⁶¹ The same has to be said about the emblematic problems and conflicts pertaining to art history as intellectual endeavour and academic discipline.

Because art is conceived as an aspect of the past for Hegel¹⁶², the *wissenschaftliche* treatment of it is relevant and necessary. For Hegel, every aesthetic judgement is also an historical judgement.¹⁶³ Wölfflin responded to this "challenge of articulating ... the conditions of possibility of coherent criteria of judgement" which Hegel provoked¹⁶⁴, in *Renaissance and Baroque* with his conception of bodiliness and in his technique of comparison. "The recognition of truth's [or, in Wölfflin's case, form's and bodiliness's] historical diversity, without the spontaneous assurance that human thought is capable of penetrating into the inner metaphysical depths of reality [an aspect which Wölfflin thought to undermine with his notion of the body as ontological and epistemological continuity, and the unifying notion of style], established the preconditions of an important dilemma", namely historicism, which, as Barash noted,

raised the perplexing eventuality of having to unify the concrete foundations of truth of different epochs into an *interpenetrating totality* [for Wölfflin the body of the subject and the style of a period], without which each epoch would remain within self-enclosed horizons precluding any possibility of a transcendent perch overlooking the whole.¹⁶⁵

Hegel's thinking forms a fundamental part of historicism¹⁶⁶, in that it generates and illustrates the diversity and with that the relativity of cultural identity, value and status within history. Historicism describes a historical consciousness towards the past as well as the historicity of the subject and of the historian in terms of a *historische Gebundenheit*, as historically bound. Wölfflin exemplified this in his

¹⁶² Hegel so famously pronounced the end of art, meaning art no longer exhibited a substantial aspect of the present for Hegel.

¹⁶³ Dittmann (1967), p. 218, he cites Helmut Kuhn: *Wesen und Wirken des Kunstwerks*, Munich, 1960, p. 18.

¹⁶⁴ Barash (1988), p. 29.

¹⁶⁵ Barash (1988), p. 29. My emphasis.

identification and relation of the Baroque to his own time.¹⁶⁷ Paret generalised this aspect stating that "political and cultural sympathies directed which epoch appeared especially significant for the present".¹⁶⁸ Similarly, "a past epoch is favoured", Wyss noted, "if the contemporary subject recognises itself in the past."¹⁶⁹ The interest into the Baroque was shaped by the late 19th century's ideas and knowledge about the past: "an age in crisis recognised the signs of crisis in a long-neglected style. The modern aesthetic experience sharpened the focus on the past".¹⁷⁰ For the historiographical discourse this aspect of the text is of importance: Wölfflin's underlying goal is to manifest a structured and systematic co-ordination of the material because the *wissenschaftliche* tendency and discourse of the discipline fostered this universalising and systematising thinking. This particular *wissenschaftliche* method of Wölfflin can be regarded as

a general revolt against positivistic methods in ... [the academic] scholarship [which] enhanced interest in period terms. Discussions as to the essence of the Renaissance, Romanticism, and Baroque occupied German ... scholars [who were] tired of the minutiae of research and eager for sweeping generalisations.¹⁷¹

In *Renaissance and Baroque*, Wölfflin is dealing with the increasing and more and more 'pronounced specialisation and fragmentation of concerns in the empirically orientated University disciplines'¹⁷². In this sense, he is concentrating on architectural effects. But Wölfflin is

¹⁶⁶ Barash (1988), p. 59. Barash mentioned "Husserl [who] traced the emergence of the problem of historicism [understood as historical relativism] back to the philosophy of Hegel".

¹⁶⁷ Wölfflin writes: one can hardly fail to recognise the affinity that our own age in particular bears to the Italian baroque (*wie sehr gerade unsere Zeit mit dem italienischen Barock verwandt ist*, p. 65/87).

¹⁶⁸ Paret (1990), p. 26.

¹⁶⁹ Wyss (1984-86), p. 28.

¹⁷⁰ Rosand (1974), p. 436.

¹⁷¹ Wellek (1998), p. 194.

also expressing generalisations with regard to the conception of the body and bodiliness. He is involved in a project of history-writing that attempts to construct unity in terms of the opposition between Baroque and Renaissance forms and effects, due to the immersion of the modern subject in the multiplicity and the diverse historicised echoes of the revival styles resonating in the 19th century. Wölfflin has created a distinct comparative approach for ordering and categorising the differences and the 'chaos' of the history of art and architecture, by integrating and merging "two fundamental concepts of mature historicism, evolution and historical individuality"¹⁷³. "The core of historicism consists in the recognition that all human ideas and ideals are subject to change".¹⁷⁴ The notion of historicity, *Geschichtlichkeit* of the subject was "elicited in conjunction with the heightened appreciation of the diversity of different epochs and cultures and of the normative truths holding sway in each of them".¹⁷⁵ This reflects Wölfflin's intention to rehabilitate and emancipate the Baroque in his 1888 text.

The phenomenon of historicism incorporates the *problem of historical meaning*, the hermeneutic problem of particularity and universality, of continuity and change in history. Wölfflin writes *Renaissance and Baroque* in this context as a theoretical and philosophical project, that is 'history as *Wissenschaft*'. The text portrays a particular solution to the problem of history, in terms of the conception of the methodology and of the construction of an historical account. Wölfflin's idea of *Wissenschaftlichkeit* is a

¹⁷² Barash (1988), p. 17.

¹⁷³ Butterfield (1998), p. 478.

¹⁷⁴ Iggers (1998), p. 457.

¹⁷⁵ Barash (1988), p. 18.

combination and, indeed, an amalgamation of the empiricism of particular examples and the specialisation of a limited timeframe, with the theoretical exploration of concepts. This relation is facilitated by the conception of the body of the subject which partakes in both these fields. Both aspects function as factor for the expression and impression of bodiliness, with which Wölfflin interprets history. The centrality of the subject can be related to Dilthey's notion of history "as a matter of epistemology: of how we can come to possess objective knowledge of the historical world. ... [in which] the individual's *Erlebnisse*, [as] he argued, constitute a structure by means of which 'one's inner life is woven into continuity'".¹⁷⁶ As a distinct approach to art history, these ideas manifest a direction of history-writing which began to question the historical material according to conceptual concerns, while previous and contemporary scholars were happy to collect, identify and catalogue.¹⁷⁷ Wölfflin's text engaged with the standard and the method of specialisation, in so far that he limited his analysis to effects of architecture in 16th century Rome. But he also undermined this mode of scholarship with his theoretical extrapolations and conceptual implications of the body. The notion of *Wissenschaft* in the discipline of art history pertains to a multi-layered field, due to the problematisation of methodological concerns and the categorisation of the particularity and identity of the involved discourses. Wölfflin's text partakes in this conflict of the discipline.

¹⁷⁶ Hvattum (2004), p. 177.

¹⁷⁷ Hermand (1965), p. 3. Hermand emphasised that the mere accumulation of (positivistic) facts was also regarded as *Wissenschaft*.

To conclude this chapter, 'systematic art history' meant history as a *Wissenschaft* pertaining to empirical analysis and the exploration of concepts and theories. The co-ordination of theory and history was necessary for Wölfflin to integrate the scholarly examination into the realm of *Wissenschaftlichkeit*. *Renaissance and Baroque* is an exploration of the Baroque, but, because of the relational constitution and methodological necessity, it is (almost by default) also about the Renaissance. Wölfflin utilised the Renaissance as a parameter or paradigm for the definition of the category of the Baroque. The anthropomorphic language and the concepts of the body and bodiliness, which implement the subject, are the reference ground upon which this historical and conceptual account of architecture is built. The text is a project within Wölfflin's conception of a *kulturhistorische* anthropology portraying his concern for the subject, and demonstrating his aesthetics of perception and reception. With this, Wölfflin presents a subjective sense of space, fostered by the experience of the subject, which became a fundamental notion for architectural Modernism.

The intricate implications and interconnections of the theoretical and the historical dimensions created significant conflicts and problems for the comprehension of Wölfflin's ideas and theories. The distinctions between the history of architectural objects, effects and characteristics of form, and the theory of architecture and the body, are suspended or amalgamated within the subject which substantiates all these areas. This complex entanglement and interweaving of theory and history of Wölfflin has long been ignored in the scholarship. Similarly, Wölfflin manifests a quite restricted definition of the Baroque: limited to 16th century Rome and the

particular field of architectural effects, which, again, is usually repressed in interpretations.¹⁷⁸ The problems of the 1888 text are emblematic of the art historical discourse at this time, which tries to develop, co-ordinate and synthesise the conflicting notions of art and of history, in theoretical and in methodological terms.

In the next chapter, on the *Principles of Art History*, the multivalent terminology and a similar affinity and interlocking of conceptual and historical concerns emphasise further this aspect of Wölfflin's thought and of the discipline of art history. The 1915 text continues to focus on the topic of the Renaissance and the Baroque, but with a wider view onto the 16th and 17th centuries in Italy and Northern Europe, comprising mostly paintings in addition to sculpture and architecture. In this respect, Wölfflin has transformed and shifted his programmatic concern from general bodiliness to visuality and the spatial worldview of the subject.

¹⁷⁸ This aspect is one of the most forgotten issues of the text. When art historians talk about Wölfflin's idea of the Baroque, in relation to the 1888 text, it is these scholars who generalise and universalise what in effect are very particularised characterisations of the Baroque and the Renaissance. While Wölfflin generalised particularities only in so far as he attempted to argue for the motifs of development and system pertaining to bodiliness.

chapter three

Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe
Das Problem der Stilentwicklung
in der Neueren Kunst

1915

Principles of Art History

The Problem of the Development of Style in Later Art

from bodiliness
to visuality

part one
THEMES & IMPLICATIONS
spatial aesthetics of the subject(s)

part two
INVOLVED DISCOURSES
visual worldview

Wölfflin's 1915 text¹ presents an extension to his concept of bodiliness. The subject continues to be the fundamental presupposition, framework and interface for the theoretical and historical explorations. The experience of bodiliness is now condensed into the visibility (*Sichtbarkeit*, *Anschauung*, *Anschaulichkeit*) of subject and object. Wölfflin focuses on very specific aspects of bodiliness, namely the visual experience of the corporeal being (*Dasein*) of subject and object, and the comprehension of this experience in inherently spatial terms. In order to develop and explain these notions of visibility and spatial vision, Wölfflin proposes *Grundbegriffe* (basic or fundamental principles) with which he attempts to differentiate and define two particular historical modes of vision (the Classical and the Baroque). The following analysis of the text seeks to identify problems and ambiguities in Wölfflin's thinking which can be seen as symptomatic of the condition of the emerging discipline of art history in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The main topic of this investigation of the 1915 text is the nature of the *Grundbegriffe*. It will be argued that Wölfflin invested the *Grundbegriffe* with multiple functions -as conceptual, categorical and historical registers. Firstly, he presented the theoretical conception or idea of the *Grundbegriffe*, which functions

¹ The *Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe* were published in 1915. Wölfflin produced two articles in addition to the text, which are now part of the collection of essays, *Gedanken zur Kunstgeschichte*, published by Wölfflin in 1941: namely "In eigener Sache" (1920), and "Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Eine Revision" (1933). The English translation, *Principles of Art History*, was made from the 7th edition (1929) of the German text, by M.D. Hottinger in 1932. All references in this thesis refer to the 11th edition of 1957 and to the English translation in the reprint of 1950. The German text in its 11th edition contains the prefaces to the 6th and 8th editions, while the English text includes the translations of the prefaces to the 6th and 7th editions.

to capture *Anschauungsformen* (forms of visual perception, contemplation and visualisation), *Vorstellungsformen* (forms of the imagination) and *Darstellungsformen* (forms of depiction). The notion is constituted by the involvement of the subject, with its focus on the visibility of the aesthetic experience in processes of perception and depiction of forms.² Wölfflin understands aesthetic objects as instruments to reveal the invisible process of mental picturing, the spatial-visual thinking of the subject. Secondly, the *Grundbegriffe* are embodied in two categories or modes, the Classical and the Baroque, pertaining to the specific historical timeframe of the 16th and 17th centuries. They demonstrate both a binary and a bi-polar scheme to circumscribe and categorise art objects according to two ideal-typical or abstracted notions of visual regimes. The chronological relationship of the before-and-after dichotomy is transformed into three designations: contrast or opposition, range of possibilities, and development. This second function of the *Grundbegriffe* exemplifies the theoretical structure of the concept in a particular historical field. The five pairs constitute the third type of the *Grundbegriffe*. As concrete historical terms, they exhibit five registers which organise and distinguish the different nature of the spatial compositions of forms and objects. The five pairs clarify and define the theoretical dichotomy by circumscribing five specific aspects of visibility and spatiality. At the same time, they are based on particular objects from the selected timeframe.

² In the English tradition, there is a distinction between visual perception, visualisation and depiction. These are entirely different concerns in the English organisation of knowledge. However, in the German discourse, these domains are merging and collaborating in the term *Vorstellung* and therefore significant for Wölfflin. The *Vorstellung* is a mechanism or faculty in the mind of the subject, the imagination, which is processing perceptions and thoughts. *Vorstellungen* are elements or ideas

The text is problematic because it is difficult to recognise, disentangle and distinguish these three levels of the *Grundbegriffe*. A dominant theme for this interpretation of the *Grundbegriffe* is Wölfflin's own terminology which frames the various conceptions. Wölfflin's multivalent terminology is indicative of the instability of the *Grundbegriffe*. As will be shown, the terms *Anschauungsformen* (forms of visual perception, contemplation and imagination) and *Darstellungsformen* (forms of depiction) are difficult to translate because they refer not only to the field of art history but also to philosophy, aesthetics, psychology, ontology and epistemology. The terminology illustrates the fundamental but problematic incorporation of the subject in both the theoretical and the historical exploration of the object.

Within the conceptual function of the *Grundbegriffe*, the terminology of perception and depiction envelopes the notion of visuality in Wölfflin's speculations about the subject's involvement in the object. This theme relates back to the *Prolegomena*, when Wölfflin explored the notions of aesthetic experience and *Erlebnis* (Dilthey). The process from perception to depiction in the artist is analysed with the concept of *das Künstlerische* (the artistic) and the medium of the drawing in the following interpretation. The notion of *das Künstlerische* pertains to the art object in relation to the artist. It provides the interface which extends the involvement of the subject, from the artist to the viewer. This splits the role of the subject into the mechanism of production -through depiction (*Darstellung*)- and the mechanism of reception -through perception (*Wahrnehmung*). The

that originate from and are produced in the imagination, and which are visualised and made visible in depictions.

themes of the vision and visuality of the subject of the 1915 text are connected to ideas of Robert Vischer and Fiedler. Hildebrand's spatial aesthetics are correlated to Wölfflin's theories with a view to the viewer's experience of the object. In this respect, the spatial aesthetics of the subject are based on the visuality of the subject with which depictions of objects, buildings and figures are perceived, conceived and understood.

Bodiliness, Wölfflin's operative concept for the subject, is now rendered in terms of visuality. His idea of visuality, in my view, is based upon and produced by the photographic reproductions of objects. The argument will be made that it was the introduction and increase in the use of photographic reproductions in art historical work, which shifted Wölfflin's conception of subject and object from bodiliness to visuality. Obviously, the physical and material experiences of an object are not conveyed in the discourse of illustrations. Photographic reproductions involve a purely visual encounter for the subject. Paired images in the text involve the participation of the subject in terms of a visual recognition of the dual rhetoric of the comparison. Wölfflin's assertions about the dichotomy of visual modes are validated in the paired reproductions through the reader's or viewer's own visual comparison.

The visual experience of perception and depiction in the illustrations provides evidence for the historical analysis and the synthesis of a particular timeframe, the 16th and 17th centuries. Within this specific historical context, the second (categorical) function of Wölfflin's *Grundbegriffe* is developed with the technique of comparison. The juxtaposition of the two modes, the Classical and the Baroque, refers directly back to the text Renaissance and

Baroque. The 1888 text established a binary opposition between the two styles and types of architectural effects; the descriptions of the Baroque were constituted by their contrast with the Renaissance, which led to Wölfflin's definition of the Baroque as logically dependent on the Renaissance. The 1915 text also reflects this conception, but the *Grundbegriffe* are organised, additionally, with a certain bi-polar logic: to understand the five pairs, both terms of each pair are necessary; they define each other reciprocally.³ The exploration of the *Grundbegriffe* with the comparisons of works in two illustrations reflects Wölfflin's concern about the systematisation of (art) history, and his attempt to work in the sphere of a documented *Wissenschaftlichkeit* ('scientificity').

Wölfflin's distinct fields of operation of this text are methodology, systemisation, history-writing, and epistemology. Together and as conceptually linked and integrated dimensions, I argue, these areas describe the discourse of the 1915 text. Wölfflin's intentions in the text⁴ are problematic and complex precisely because the theoretical and conceptual, the systematic and the epistemological speculations are connected and integrated, but more importantly, because they are constituted by the historical analysis.

³ Despite its appearance, the 1915 text is not about the periods of the Renaissance and the Baroque as such. Within the field of the *Grundbegriffe*, the two categories or modes are historically successive, but conceptually considered as equal visual regimes. The five pairs are the registers for these dichotomous settings of the organisation of spatial compositions and visual demarcations of forms.

⁴ These intentions were to display a distinct methodology, the comparison; to construct the historical investigation and the interpretation of history as a system; and to explore the epistemological dimensions of the fundamental involvement and participation of the subject in the identity, characterisation and description of the object.

In part one of the chapter, the dominant themes (terminology, comparison and illustrations) and implications of the text are examined, partly in terms of their intertextual connections to other texts and ideas⁵, to reveal Wölfflin's 'spatial aesthetics of the subject(s)'. The second part attempts to construct the various discourses⁶ in which the textual motifs can be situated. These fields portray Wölfflin's 'visual worldview' of art history. To conclude this chapter, the most prominent aspects are briefly summarised, before the final section of conclusions brings the reading of all three texts (and chapters) together, relating the text-specific arguments to a more general historiographical interpretation of the Wölfflinian discourse.

⁵ Robert Vischer, Fiedler, and Hildebrand; Wölfflin's terminology, *das Künstlerische* and the drawing.

⁶ The disciplines of art history and architectural theory, the context of *Wissenschaft* and history-writing, and philosophical references and influences.

spatial aesthetics of the subject(s)

The central thread in this interpretation of the 1915 text is the analysis of the nature of the *Grundbegriffe*. The diverse terminology Wölfflin employed in the text indicates a variety of discourses and fields of knowledge which are involved. The text is neither purely theoretical nor a sustained historical analysis. The integration of empirical works at a historically specific level, and the demarcation of the *Grundbegriffe* at the abstract level of contrasting aesthetic categories through a technique of comparison, shows the interweaving of both, the historical and the theoretical. The constitution of the *Grundbegriffe* in paired illustrations positions the visibility of subject and (reproduced) object as empirical experience at the forefront of the text. Wölfflin outlines how the subject encounters art and architecture, namely in terms of a visibility which folds subject and object together. He developed a particular vocabulary to designate and circumscribe this field of visibility.

TERMINOLOGY

Wölfflin describes the nature of his text and of his *Grundbegriffe* with, what Weiss called "a broad eclecticism of the articulation"¹, "depending on the context and the methodological reference"² which Wölfflin intended to emphasise. The variety of the terms is indicative of the internal instability of the conception of the

¹ Weiss (1996), p. 80.

² Weiss (1996), p. 81.

Grundbegriffe. In the preface to the 6th edition (1922), Wölfflin outlined the project of the text as the characterisation³ of style (*Stilcharakteristik*), as analysing forms of conception or of the imagination (*Vorstellungsformen*)⁴ and terms of the visual perception, contemplation and visualisation (*Anschauungsbegriffe*), which prescribe the possibilities of forms (*Formmöglichkeiten*), and present an evolutionary line (*Entwicklungslinie*) of the visual imagination (*anschauliches Vorstellen*).⁵

The overall intention of the text, Wölfflin wrote, was to provide a scale⁶ (*Maßstäbe*) with which to register historical change (*geschichtliche Wandlungen*).⁷ He wanted to present the scope within which the changes in the depiction of spatial compositions during the 16th and 17th centuries, together with the experience of perception as the "aesthetic viewing process"⁸, could be defined. The running together of perception and depiction⁹ keeps certain problems hinged together, such as the *ahistorical* nature of perception and the *historical* factor of depictions. This tension is emblematic within the emergent discipline of art history, which attempted to co-ordinate the diverse categories of art (Kant) and history (Hegel). Wölfflin's text pertains to a genre in which the theory and the writing of art history are completely fused.

³ Translated as 'classification' of style in the English edition, *Principles*, p. vii.

⁴ The notion of *Vorstellung* indicates both forms of visual imagination and types of depictions. As such, the concept is untranslatable, because no clear English parallel exists. The term characterises the frontier between subject and object. Note that I avoided to use the English term 'representation' for *Darstellung* (depiction) throughout the thesis because it would create an enormous barrier to any consistent argument and it involves too many implications besides the aspects pertaining to Wölfflin's ideas and text.

⁵ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 5, *Principles*, p. vii.

⁶ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 5. Translated as 'standards' in *Principles*, p. vii.

⁷ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 5, *Principles*, p. vii.

⁸ Adler (2004), p. 433.

⁹ Which Wölfflin inherited from Brunn, as explained later, and from Dilthey who united the "constant element of perception and depiction" in his characterisation of style

Wölfflin did *not* want to give an account of the art history of the selected timeframe as such, and says so directly in the text.¹⁰ The notion of *Maßstab*, scape or scope, manifests the theoretical constitution of the two categories in the art history of those two hundred years, indicating its positionality as a system of terms according to which works can be grouped.

perception & depiction The diverse conceptual terminology organises the discussion of the *Grundbegriffe* around perception, beholding and depiction. The German words of *Wahrnehmung* (perception, observing, detection, awareness), *Auffassung* (perception, conception, interpretation, understanding, opinion, view), *Anschauung* (beholding, visualisation, contemplation, opinion, view, notion), *Vorstellung* (imagination, conception, illusion, picturing, idea) and *Darstellung* (depiction, portrayal, showing, representation, description, illustration), all situate the text in the overlap between philosophy, psychology and epistemology, as well as aesthetics and art theory. The terminology has obvious and intricate affinities which are manifested in some complex translations, e.g. *Wahrnehmung* and *Auffassung* as perception¹¹, *Auffassung* and *Vorstellung* as conception¹². In general, the terms surround the mental activities of the subject's visual life when engaged with the physical and sensual world. The visual interaction with objects and

("Denn Stil ist ja eben die konstante Auffassungs- und Darstellungsweise"). Diltney (1892), vol. VI, p. 284 (of 1924 ed. of *Gesammelte Schriften*).

¹⁰ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 5, *Principles*, p. vii.

¹¹ While *Wahrnehmung* implies the process of perception in terms of observation, awareness and detection, when experiencing the world, it is a term employed for a biological/physiological and psychological meaning; *Auffassung*, on the other hand, denotes perception as mental domain, in the sense of understanding, interpreting, but also as having an opinion and attitude related to thinking and reasoning.

other subjects is processed by arranging, composing and interpreting visual and spatial impressions. In the case of the artist, these operations are subsequently depicted.

Wölfflin most likely inherited the vocabulary of "*sinnlicher Wahrnehmung und Anschauung* (sensory perception, visualisation and visual contemplation)" from his University teacher of classical archaeology in Munich, Heinrich Brunn.¹³ In the essay 'Archaeology and Visual Contemplation (*Archäologie und Anschauung*)', Brunn stressed the relevance of the field of beholding¹⁴ for art historical understanding in terms of visualisation and visual contemplation of the forms of antique sculpture.¹⁵ Brunn's text involves the psychological category of *Einfühlung*, empathy, in his analysis of the figurative sculpture of antiquity, to identify patterns of perception and visualisation in the portrayals of the forms of the human body.

In the Revision of 1933¹⁶, Wölfflin stressed the functions of his *Grundbegriffe*, in the field of depiction: as a changing "*Ausdrucksapparat* (apparatus of expression)"¹⁷ and as "*neue Formmöglichkeiten* (new possibilities of form)"¹⁸. He also covered the field of perception, with the transformation of the "*Anschauungsform* (forms of beholding and visualisation)"¹⁹, the "*Vorstellungsarten* (ways of imagining, thinking and contemplating visually)"²⁰, and,

¹² *Vorstellung*, when compared to *Auffassung*, is a form of conception as picturing and visual imagination and contemplation, as visualisation in the mind.

¹³ Brunn (1885), p. 11; 19.

¹⁴ Brunn wrote: "only personal observation leads to an understanding (*führt nur eigenes Sehen, eigenes Beobachten zum Verständnis*)". Brunn (1885), p. 22.

¹⁵ Brunn (1885), p. 12, 22.

¹⁶ The revision is unfortunately not included in the English translation.

¹⁷ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 274.

¹⁸ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 278.

¹⁹ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 275.

²⁰ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 275.

additionally, in general terms as "Anschauungsentwicklung (the development of beholding and visualisation)"²¹.

Wölfflin defined his *Grundbegriffe* as types²² of the imagination (*Vorstellungstypen*), when they are conceived "from a certain distance (*Anblick aus grösserer Weite*)".²³ In the preface to the 8th edition (1943), the *Grundbegriffe* are supposed to portray a general history of vision and depiction (*allgemeine Seh- und Darstellungsgeschichte*) within the timeframe of the 16th and 17th centuries.²⁴ Depiction is regarded as an expression of the visual imagination²⁵ and is integrated into visual practices and experiences, functioning as 'applied seeing'. The depiction is understood as a perceptual phenomenon and is defined in perceptual terms. Perception and conception of form (*Formauffassung*) are implemented in the spatial structure and organisation of forms in depictions. The exploration of the spatial properties of depictions was Wölfflin's solution to the problem of discovering the underlying visual aesthetics²⁶ of the styles of the selected periods.²⁷ The artworks were analysed in terms of a set of relations in which forms produced different spatial effects for the subject. Wölfflin saw in the depicted forms the invisible mental forms with which the subject co-ordinates and structures reality

²¹ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 279.

²² "The notion of types had been widespread amongst scientists in the 19th century, the idea being that the type shows what is characteristic of a larger group – it is typical." Hatt and Klonck (2006), p. 51.

²³ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 7, *Principles*, p. ix.

²⁴ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 7. The English translation was made from the 7th edition (1929) of the German text, therefore, the preface to the 8th German edition was not translated; in later editions of the English translation, no other or later prefaces were included.

²⁵ This idea echoes Dilthey's notion of historical understanding which Gardiner summarised as "all physical expressions are expressions of mental events, or states". Gardiner (1959), p. 211.

²⁶ A such, the *Grundbegriffe* are "creations of the mind [of the historian], means of classification", as Hautecoeur (1953) noted with regard to some scholars' (mis)understanding of the *Grundbegriffe* as defined entities.

²⁷ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 22, *Principles*, p. 11. "...Problem, die Bedingungen aufzudecken, die als stofflicher Einschlag ... den Stil von Individuen, Epochen und Völkern formen."

during visual perception. Wiesing stated that for Wölfflin the imagination, visualisation and conception (*Anschauung, Vorstellung*) of the subject were considered equivalent to artistic depictions in the sense that both dimensions were "modelling a visibility of some sort".²⁸ The difference is in that the depiction is a visible medium, while perception is a visual yet invisible process. The logic of vision and perception pertains to material form which becomes visual in a mental image of the subject²⁹. While the logic of depiction is the conversion of a mental form into a work of art or architecture. The connection between perception and depiction is form. Form is the visual interface in which spatiality is depicted and perceived. Wölfflin used the spatial organisation of depictions to reflect speculatively on the invisible spatial forms of perceptions and the visual imagination. The analysis of works of art is "instrumentalised", Wiesing noted³⁰, in order to formulate speculative ideas about the ways the subject deals with space in terms of a mental visuality. Principles of spatial depiction in art objects are correlated to forms of perception (*Wahrnehmung*) and of conception and imagination (*Vorstellung*) in the subject because Wölfflin saw them as processes with identical structures.

In the 1915 text, Wölfflin did not explore the meaning and use of his conceptual terminology as such. He employed a variety of

²⁸ Wiesing (1997), p. 118.

²⁹ In this regard, Wölfflin speculates in a notebook about the nature and the relation between perception and visual contemplation, stating that: "the visual contemplation presents a sum of aspects in chaotic confusion; only by supplementing the visual contemplation with a concept, do the individual perceptions gather a structure (*Die Anschauung gibt nur eine Summe von Merkmalen, chaotisch durcheinander; erst dadurch, dass ich den Begriff zur Anschauung hinzubringe, ordnen sich die einzelnen Wahrnehmungen*)". Notebook 9 (1885), p. 77.

³⁰ Wiesing (1997), p. 119.

terms in order to delineate the particularity and the contribution of this theoretical dimension of visual experience within the proliferation of an academic and *wissenschaftliche* history of art. Due to Wölfflin's interest in the psychological aspects of the aesthetic experience, he must have been aware of the speculative aspect of his terminology. But because he failed to make the relations between the various fields clear, I suggest that the interpretative capacities of the implications of the text have not yet been fully recognised. It has to be remembered that Wölfflin in his 1915 text is not writing a book of psychology or philosophy. He is employing certain dimensions of these areas with all their underlying implications and problems. Besides reprimanding Wölfflin for not clearly outlining the complexity of his terminology, it seems obvious to me that he ignored this dimension in order to develop not a theoretical text but one which is thoroughly embedded within and fertilised by the analytical and the interpretative fields of art history.

The interconnections of Wölfflin's terminology throughout the text complicate any immediate understanding of the text. Wölfflin stated that the *Grundbegriffe* can be treated as forms of depiction (*Darstellungsformen*) or (meaning and) as forms of beholding (*Anschauungsformen*) in the introduction to the text.³¹ He then explained the difference between the two conceptions. "The forms of beholding are the forms through or with which nature is seen"; while "the forms of depiction are the forms with which art manifests its [visual] content" in spatial forms.³² Wölfflin identified these two

³¹ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 27. *Principles*, p. 16. My emphasis. This is the only direct distinction Wölfflin makes in the text between the two dimensions of the *Grundbegriffe*.

³² *Grundbegriffe*, p. 27. *Principles*, p. 16. This is the only distinction Wölfflin makes in the text between the two areas of identity of the *Grundbegriffe*.

meanings of his *Grundbegriffe*, but he never clarified the difference between them further. He blended the two fields in the category of beholding, of visual contemplation, *Kategorien der Anschauung*, in the conclusion of his text.³³ The duality of this terminology was not clarified by Wölfflin, as Gaiger also observed: "Wölfflin never clearly distinguishes between perception, taken in the broad sense of 'imaginative beholding', and depiction, in the strict sense of pictorial representation".³⁴ While Wölfflin recognised these two dimensions, he did not discuss their different implications. These connections remain a central problem of the text.

The connection between perception and depiction is the essential characteristic of Wölfflin's conceptual notion of the *Grundbegriffe*. These are not simply two distinct areas of investigation which Wölfflin muddled up. Wölfflin's conception of perception and of depiction delineates two dimensions of the theoretical identity of the *Grundbegriffe*, which are interconnected and interdependent, one might even say, constitutively linked; they present a "net of correspondences"³⁵. Gaiger interpreted the two fields of application of the modes with a strong and a weak sense in regard to the 'history of vision'. He wrote:

In its strong sense, it is the claim that at different periods in human history, human beings actually see the world in different ways. ... [with reference] to transformations in the ways in which visual phenomena are apprehended. In its weaker sense, the claim is simply that different historical periods have produced different modes of *representation*. The former is a claim about human beings and their perception of the world, the latter is a claim about the configurational and relational properties of artworks.³⁶

³³ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 262, *Principles*, p. 227.

³⁴ Gaiger (2002), p. 25, footnote 17.

³⁵ Habermas (1985), p. 139.

³⁶ Gaiger (2002), p. 25f. Gaiger's emphasis.

Although Gaiger outlines the distinction between the two fields of application clearly, he did not make the connection between them in terms of the subject who as artist belongs to both these dimensions. But the relation between beholding and depicting is importantly dependent upon Wölfflin's concern for the subject in the role of the artist. The role of the artist as the link between perception and depiction is central for this interpretation of the 1915 text. It seems that not many critics realised the fundamental affiliation of the two dimensions of the concepts with regard to the artist. A recent anthology of art historical methodology defines and cites Wölfflin's five pairs of principles as "oppositional characteristics of artistic attitude or of the visual appearance of works of art"³⁷, without commenting either on the difference of these two dimensions, or upon the affiliation of these two dimensions.

Gaiger as well as Brassat and Kohle in their anthology, all understand 'depiction' (*Darstellung*) as part of the identity of the work, meaning aspects of composition in the domain of the visual (e.g. the pictorial in paintings). Gaiger wrote: it "is a claim about the configurational and relational properties of *artworks*"³⁸. Brassat and Kohle defined Wölfflin's *Grundbegriffe* as being about the "visual appearance of works of art".³⁹ It is crucial to point out here the difference between the characterisation of 'depiction' as constituting only the work, as exemplified by Gaiger and Brassat and Kohle, and my interpretation of Wölfflin's concept of depiction as the production of the artist. The depiction by an artist consists firstly in the

³⁷ Brassat and Kohle (2003), p. 52. "[Die fünf Begriffspaare] bezeichnen jeweils gegensätzliche Merkmale der künstlerischen Auffassung bzw. der visuellen Erscheinungsweise von Kunstwerken". My emphasis.

³⁸ Gaiger (2002), p. 26. My emphasis.

³⁹ Brassat and Kohle (2003), p. 52. My emphasis.

perception of reality, the artist's cultural and aesthetic identity, in terms of beholding, observing, and through visualisation. This perception is translated through artistic production, in the sense of expressing the aesthetic experience(s) of beholding and visual contemplation.

Wölfflin's concern for visual experience and perception, with its direct implication of the subject, prompt the present interpretation to focus on the involvement of the subject in its various roles, as artist and as viewer. In this respect, Grabar noted that

the issue of perception ... is in part a purely physiological question of how one sees, but obviously it is much more important in its psychological ... and intellectual complexity since it leads to nearly all the judgements we make about works of art. It is an issue that is centred on man, on the receiver of the visual message.⁴⁰

The role of the subject is of pivotal significance in Wölfflin's approach to art history. This role is also implied by Podro's term of "interpretative vision" for Wölfflin's ideas, which he regarded as "the exercise of such vision in the work of the *artist*, retraced by the *historian*".⁴¹ Summers added to Podro's concept of 'interpretative vision' "a theory of expression".⁴² Lipps stated that in order to understand the artwork, one had to understand the process through which the work evolved in the artist.⁴³ Visual experiences influence and shape the "imagination of the artist".⁴⁴ The subject (as artist and viewer) presents an aspect of both participation and agency of visuality. The activity of the artist is not solely depiction, but also perception prior to depiction; the artist is also an observer. One has to recognise that the making, the visual experience, the effects and

⁴⁰ Grabar (1982), p. 283.

⁴¹ Podro (1982), p. 61ff. My emphasis.

⁴² Summers (1989), p. 375.

⁴³ Lipps (1903), p. 5.

effectiveness of art are all dependent on an observer – and, as Crary formulated it, on “an organisation of the visible that vastly exceeds the domain conventionally examined by art history”⁴⁵. In this regard, Wölfflin's discourse of all three texts examined in this thesis centres on an embodied subject. Wölfflin has set up the epistemological and the historical dimensions of objects of art and architecture in terms of the bodiliness of the subject.⁴⁶ In the 1915 text, he has condensed bodiliness to visuality. It is no longer the body, but the eyes and vision which characterise the experience of the object by the subject.⁴⁷ Wölfflin now concentrated on the visual experience of the reproduction rather than on the corporeal experience of the object. This relegation of the body might explain Wölfflin's comparative neglect of architecture⁴⁸ and the greater attention he pays to painting.

Wölfflin attempted to develop the *Grundbegriffe* as linking depiction and perception, (art) history and the subject. His categories are both a condition for his interpretation of historical material, and an abstraction from the empirical reality of the examples. On one side, the *Grundbegriffe* are a theoretical concept (of visuality), on the other, they are historical generalisations (about particular modes of visuality). This ambiguity reflects the two-

⁴⁴ Dilthey (1883), p. 32. “*die Einbildungskraft des Künstlers*”.

⁴⁵ Crary (1992), p. 23.

⁴⁶ As described in the two previous chapters.

⁴⁷ The notion of visuality came to the foreground for Wölfflin due to the introduction of photographic reproductions into the art historical scholarship, which will be argued more extensively in the section on ‘two illustrations’.

⁴⁸ While architecture is included in the 1915 text, it seems obvious, that Wölfflin withdrew to a certain extent from the realm of architecture and bodiliness during the 1890s, as the topics of his publications during this time suggest. Michelangelo text (1891), *Classic Art* (1899), Dürer text (1905).

way traffic between the philosophical or abstract and the historical or concrete levels of Wölfflin's thinking.

Wölfflin had wanted to define two visual regimes, the Classical and the Baroque, as if the artworks from those periods were prompted by, and prompt in turn, two different experiences which can be understood as two different languages of form. The "interior optical development (*innere optische Entwicklung*)" of a work is itself supposed to be based on sub-concepts (*Grundbegriffe*) which mark and characterise all artistic depiction as such.⁴⁹ These "primary given modes of depiction (*primär gegebene Darstellungsformen*)" describe the visual conditions and possibilities of perception of a certain period, in terms of an 'optical schema' with which all artists necessarily engage and work with.⁵⁰ Wölfflin makes clear that the two modes should not be understood just in terms of a qualitative difference, but as *another* visual orientation, as two different artistic perceptions, conceptions and attitudes (*künstlerische Auffassung*), both having intrinsic value.⁵¹ As "distinct and equally legitimate modes"⁵², Wölfflin again attempts to emancipate the Baroque.⁵³

In short, the terminology of the *Grundbegriffe* is complex. Each term is a conceptual statement and displays an "index of the continuing instability"⁵⁴ of Wölfflin's theories. The connection

⁴⁹ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 23. *Principles*, p. 12. Translated as "substratum of concepts".

⁵⁰ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 23f. *Principles*, p. 12. The visual modes are sort of a description of rules which regulate what can be produced, but Wölfflin does not want to restrict the artist. The works are both the result of rules and transgressions of rules as locus of innovation.

⁵¹ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 27. *Principles*, p. 16. My emphasis.

⁵² Melville (1990), p. 9. Cf. Brown (1982): "It is true that Wölfflin intended *Principles of Art History* in part as defence of baroque art" (p. 382).

⁵³ The emancipation of the Baroque, I argued in the previous chapter, was one of the main concerns in *Renaissance and Baroque*. With the 1915 text, Wölfflin adds to this argument.

⁵⁴ Melville (1990), p. 9.

between the terms is marked by the manifold intentions and discourses⁵⁵.

In the notebooks one finds references to the heterogeneous terminology of the 1915 text. In relation to the thematic content of the discipline of art history, Wölfflin commented in 1886/87: "Nobody dares to engage with perception or conception".⁵⁶ This comment can be taken as a resolution to work in this area. But the quotation also shows ("nobody dares...") that this area of investigation was considered problematic. In the same notebook, Wölfflin identified certain "problems of art history: 2. style and individuality, 3. ... history of vision, 4. production and perception (artist and audience)".⁵⁷ A few pages earlier, Wölfflin listed his "universal conception" of art as "1. History of vision (*wissenschaftlich* important), 2. History of the feeling of form, style = feeling of or for life, 3. History of feeling, appreciation and admiration of the world".⁵⁸ The notebook references show that Wölfflin always conceived art history in terms of the subject: on the one hand, the connection of the style of an artist with the style(s) of the time and place - in the sense that individual artistic production is conditioned by and conditions its time, as well as the style(s) of the artistic community. Wölfflin finds it difficult to separate the individual style of an artist and the style(s) of the culture because they influence each other. The subject as artist is situated in

⁵⁵ The discourses of philosophy and psychology, epistemology and ontology, aesthetics, the theory of art and the theory of art history.

⁵⁶ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 117. "An die 'Auffassung' wagt sich niemand".

⁵⁷ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 174. "Probleme der Kunstgeschichte: 2. Der Stil und die Individualität, 3. ... Geschichte des Sehns, 4. Produktion und Perzeption (Künstler und Publicum)".

⁵⁸ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 160. "Universale Auffassung: 1. Gesch.[ichte] des Sehns (*wissenschaftlich* wichtig), 2. Gesch.[ichte] des Formgefühls, Stil = Lebensgefühl, 3. Gesch.[ichte] des Fühlens und Genießens, Schätzung der Welt".

the surrounding history and culture. On the other hand, the subject is conceived as a beholder⁵⁹. The duality of the subject as artist and as viewer informs and underlies the 1915 text.

In a later notebook, Wölfflin outlined his approach to the art historical inquiry: "History of form (aesthetically), a. History of vision, recognising, knowing, understanding reality".⁶⁰ Wölfflin describes the aesthetic experience as significant for an art historical exploration. Depiction and perception both determine this aesthetic experience by the subject, artist and viewer. For Wölfflin, the visual experience establishes and organises the history of form.

In Notebook 37, when outlining a history of vision (*Geschichte des Sehns*), Wölfflin listed the term 'depiction' (*Darstellung*) twice, also in relation to the history of composition.⁶¹ Depiction (*Darstellung*) is the activity of the artist. Wölfflin stresses the artist's function within the visual and visualisation, in terms of observation, composition and the depiction of spatial form(s). When Wölfflin developed his ideas for the publication of the *Principles* in his notebooks, around 1912 and 1913, he wrote down "moments of the development of depiction [*Momente der Darstellungsentwicklung*]".⁶² This reference implies that works could be seen as 'moments', meaning the exemplification and actualisation of the hypothetical typology of the two visual modes. And even near the end of his life, Wölfflin noted: "my particularity is beholding", "history of vision – no, history of feeling of form" and "one always sees in

⁵⁹ Unfortunately, Wölfflin does not discuss the distinction between the contemporary audience of the art work, the abstracted viewer of Kant's aesthetics, or the historian in the present.

⁶⁰ Notebook 15 (1887/88), p. 51v. "Gesch.[ichte] der Form (ästhet.[isch]), a. Gesch.[ichte] des Sehns, Erk.[ennen/Erkenntnis] der Wirklichk.[eit]".

⁶¹ Notebook 37 (Jan. 1900-March 1901), p. 47r. "2. Depiction of trees (*Darstellung der Bäume*) ... 6. Depiction of affects (*Darstellung der Affecte*)".

forms".⁶³ These quotations make clear that the visual experience of the structures of forms and space in a work of art and architecture, are deeply interrelated and connected to the process of conceiving, mental picturing, and depicting forms by the artist for Wölfflin. The *Grundbegriffe* associate and identify the distinct roles of the subject across time: production in terms of the artist of the past, and reception in terms of the viewer then and now.

In regard to Wölfflin's doctoral dissertation, the experience of form and spatial effects remains a significant theme in the *Principles* of 1915. In the 1886 text, the bodily experience of the beholding subject is projected into the architectural object with its organisational and corporeal aspect of form (horizontality and verticality). In the 1915 text, the forms of visual imagination of the subject are related to the material visualisation and composition of form in an artistic depiction. Works present form-moments of the depicted visuality of the artist. At another level, the previous quotations from the 1940 notebook also show that Wölfflin is still trying to clarify his conception and analysis of art. He attempts to exemplify what art is for him, namely, the visual experience of spatial form by the subject.⁶⁴

history The nature of the objects which Wölfflin used as illustrative examples, forced him to situate his analysis in history. Because he chooses his examples from the 16th and 17th centuries in Europe, the categorical exploration of the two modes is set within a

⁶² Notebook 51 (Spring 1912-April 1913), p. 14r.

⁶³ Notebook 83 (July-Sept. 1940), p. 46r; 49r. "Mein Besonderes sei die Anschauung"; "Sehgeschichte – nein, Geschichte des Formgefühls"; "Man sieht immer in Formen". Wölfflin's emphasis.

defined historical field. The text can be interpreted as a speculation about two different historical dispositions of visibility. This visibility is constituted through diverse patterns of forms and space in works of art, sculpture and architecture which are characteristic of the particular periods. In this respect, Wölfflin conceives of distinct types of visibility. The historical nature of these works with which the speculations are exemplified involves the domain of a particular segment of (art) history (the 16th and 17th centuries). It is the situatedness of the examples, I argue, which defines and generates the *Grundbegriffe* in their specificity as Wölfflin's categorical two modes and historical five pairs. It is not possible, in my opinion, to divorce the categorical terms from their historical conditions and identities. If Wölfflin would have located his inquiries within the late Middle Ages and the early Renaissance, or in the 19th and early 20th centuries, the resulting *Grundbegriffe* as categorical and historical registers would have been different. But the specificity of the historical analysis of certain works from the 16th and 17th centuries within the 1915 text then intensifies the ambiguity concerning the nature of the *Grundbegriffe*. The reader can easily forget that Wölfflin is after conceptual terms, as Ferger correctly observed⁶⁴, and which is clear from the title of the book: Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe (*Principles of Art History*). The historical framework of the particular terms for Wölfflin's two modes and five pairs of characteristics is also the analytic dimension from which Wölfflin derives his theoretical speculations. The differences in spatial

⁶⁴ This means visibility instead of bodiliness which defined the relation between subject and object in the earlier texts.

⁶⁵ Ferger (1964), Heft 11.

organisation and visual depiction observed in works from the 16th and 17th centuries allowed Wölfflin to explore the conceptual identity of the *Grundbegriffe* in the first place. The five pairs of conceptual terms were not developed as such by Wölfflin and then applied to the historical specifics of the Renaissance and the Baroque. The analysis of the historical material also generated the *Grundbegriffe*. Speculation and the historical analysis are intertwined. They cultivated each other in Wölfflin's thinking. This is why it is so difficult to separate theory from history, history from terminology, and terminology from aesthetics and theory, in this historiographical analysis.

evolution & transformation Wölfflin's text attempts to construct a theoretical justification for a visual history, in which art works could be compared and have both a relative and relational position within art historical knowledge. The examples compared in the text and in the illustrations distinguish and identify the two modes of the Classical and the Baroque types. At the same time, Wölfflin aimed to describe the concept of development in the visual transformations of the experiences of space in works of art across the 16th and 17th centuries.⁶⁶ The two modes of the five pairs were not only meant to designate two polar differences but also to mark the shift, transition and change from the one mode to the other. This means that Wölfflin attempted to define polar opposites and a developmental transition in the same way he interpreted Roman Baroque

⁶⁶ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 5; *Principles*, p. vii, "an evolutionary line (*Entwicklungslinie*)". *Grundbegriffe*, p. 23; *Principles*, p. 12, "interior optical development (*innere optische Entwicklung*)". *Grundbegriffe*, p. 279 (Revision), "the development of beholding and visualisation (*Anschauungsentwicklung*)".

architecture of the 16th century in the *Renaissance and Baroque*. In the *Principles*, Wölfflin refined this idea by suggesting that the 'pure' concepts of these oppositions must be understood as being abstract. The polar difference was considered to be a hypothetical and notional, that is, a categorical conception of types within which the art historian could then categorise and classify the actual, material art works, always in relative positions to each other. The examples of well-known works were meant to illustrate this difference; they substantiate the validity of the theoretical conception of the two types. Wölfflin worked here in the domain of the theory of art history. But on the other hand, Wölfflin, by using examples, wanted to present the transition from one type to the other, and thereby to describe the actual historical process of change from one type, style and century to the next. Here he was working within the practice of art history.⁶⁷ In this sense, the five pairs of the *Grundbegriffe* manifest how perception and depiction in the works changed as implementation of two subsequently dominating patterns of visuality. This conception resulted in the dual typology of the classical style of the Renaissance and the style of the Baroque.

style Style is an essential element and convention within art historical scholarship. As Ackerman noted, "style is a protection against chaos".⁶⁸ Wölfflin attempted to conceptualise a particular notion of style with regard to the visual experience. "For him", Woodfield wrote, "style was connected with vision, but vision

⁶⁷ I mean the practice of art history not in the conventional sense of dating, identifying artists, content and themes, or patrons, which Wölfflin regarded not as serious *Wissenschaft* anyway, but rather the attempt to trace and portray the developmental nature of the visual concept of space through history.

⁶⁸ Ackerman (1962), p. 228.

itself was the artist's vision".⁶⁹ This vision was characterised by the capacity of the artist to see, perceive, conceive, imagine and depict; vision generated style.⁷⁰ Ackerman observed generally that "our perceptual mechanisms cause us to interpret what we see in terms of what we know and expect"; with particular reference to the artist, he wrote that: "an artist cannot invent himself out of his time and, if he could, he would succeed only in making his work incomprehensible by abandoning the framework in which it might be understood".⁷¹ In this sense, Wölfflin's *Grundbegriffe* of spatial vision can be interpreted as a distinctive theory of style. It is only a *relative* concept of style which intends a *conceptual* and *categorical* elucidation of the material, as Rothacker commented in 1919.⁷² In the introduction of the 1915 text⁷³, Wölfflin described how conventional art historical scholarship applies the term to refer to the level of individual artists and also a collective style of a school, a city, a region, a nation or period. Apart from these applications, Wölfflin proposed, according to Hauser, a third field or 'root' of style, the mode of depiction.⁷⁴ In relation to the earlier account of 'depiction' as the juncture of perception and production, this apparent third field can be considered, in my opinion, as a combination of the first two roots of style. The artist, as the connection between beholding and depicting, is the intersection of style at the level of the individual with the style of the place and the time of the individual. In the depiction, the artist always already exhibits and exemplifies his/her

⁶⁹ Woodfield (2001), p. 68.

⁷⁰ Bauer, H. (1992), p. 15. "Für Wölfflin waren Sehfähigkeit und -gewohnheit stilbildend".

⁷¹ Ackerman (1962), p. 228.

⁷² Rothacker (1919), p. 171. My emphasis.

⁷³ In the section on 'The Double Root of Style', *Grundbegriffe*, p. 11ff, *Principles*, p. 1ff.

individual style and mode of perception, as well as his/her personal position and relation to the existing culture and style(s) of the time and place.

In the text, Wölfflin's "visual root of style" demarcates the "substratum of concepts that describe the specifically *visual* features of pictorial art", as Gaiger observed.⁷⁵ For Gaiger, the application of the concept of style functions as a 'logic of depiction': Wölfflin's *Grundbegriffe* are seen as "a set of objective parameters that ... allow the comparative analysis of the formal organisation of pictures despite differences in period, subject matter, format, etc."⁷⁶ In this sense, Wölfflin's conceptual terms transcend history in Gaiger's view; he regards them as "ahistorical" and as "basic tools for the analysis of [any] pictorial style, but they are not themselves stylistic categories".⁷⁷ To make this distinction clear, Gaiger argued that Wölfflin's *Grundbegriffe* can be used to explore the visual modes of depiction of any work of art. Although Wölfflin, in the 1915 text, identified the styles of the Renaissance and the Baroque with the five pairs, the five pairs themselves are, according to Gaiger, not tied to these periods. They can be used with any style, epoch or culture. Gaiger based his interpretation on the relation of the modes to the term 'depiction' with a pivotal separation from "Wölfflin's larger theory of historical development" because Gaiger's "primary purpose is", as he stated, "to enable the critical and historical

⁷⁴ Hauser (1986), p. 47. "*die Darstellungsart als solche*".

⁷⁵ Gaiger (2002), p. 24. Gaiger's emphasis. Gaiger's identification of "pictorial art" as the area of implementation seems restrictive. Also in regard to the following quote from Gaiger, he associated and administrated Wölfflin's *Grundbegriffe* only within the medium of painting or the pictorial domain of images, "pictures" (which includes drawings), but left out sculpture and architecture which Wölfflin included.

⁷⁶ Gaiger (2002), p. 24.

⁷⁷ Gaiger (2002), p. 34.

analysis of artworks".⁷⁸ Gaiger was not primarily concerned with a reading of Wölfflin's ideas within the 1915 text. He interpreted and extended them in order to develop, as he explained, "a set of objective parameters within which stylistic change can be seen to take place".⁷⁹ In Gaiger's argument, the five pairs of *Grundbegriffe* provide concepts with which the 'logic of [all artistic] depiction' can be analysed, quite independently from the identities of any distinctive styles, such as the Renaissance and the Baroque. For Gaiger, the five pairs do not have any actual 'historically specific' character but are abstract concepts to describe stylistic transformations in general. Gaiger's appropriation of Wölfflin's text exemplifies the difference between his extended version of the theories, designed to develop means for contemporary analysis, and my present reading of the *Principles*, which attempts to reconstruct Wölfflin's own discourse.

With regard to my insistence that the *Grundbegriffe* are wedded to historical periods, reference needs to be made to Wölfflin's comment in the preface to the 6th edition of the text, where he mentioned a certain "parallelism of developmental lines" to other times in the history of art.⁸⁰ In the fourth section of the conclusion, 'Periodicity of the Development', Wölfflin stated that "in all architectural styles of the Occident there can be certain perennial and perpetual developments observed".⁸¹ He restricted this statement immediately in the following sentence, where he named only the architecture of antiquity and of the Gothic era as examples

⁷⁸ Gaiger (2002), p. 34.

⁷⁹ Gaiger (2002), p. 36.

⁸⁰ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 6, *Principles*, p. viii.

of styles which have manifested classical and subsequent baroque tendencies.⁸² A page later, Wölfflin further permitted or prescribed the extension of the five pairs of the *Grundbegriffe* in relation to the entire history of art, stating that "the development, however, will only fulfil itself where the forms have passed from hand to hand long enough or, better expressed, where the imagination, the fantasy has occupied itself with forms actively enough to make it produce its baroque possibilities".⁸³ Wölfflin initially limited the application of the *Grundbegriffe* to other styles (antiquity and the Gothic) in the text. In the 1920 article, "*In eigener Sache*", he furthermore made it clear that the "*Grundbegriffe*, as they delineate and typify the time of the Renaissance and of the Baroque, [that is, in terms of the five pairs] could not be transferred *talia qualia* to any other period"; "a fact", he added, which "should [however] not stop the posing of questions about the natural conditions of the developments of vision and visuality again and again", that is, with regard to other styles or periods.⁸⁴ These citations from Wölfflin's texts indicate that he conceived of the five specific pairs of *Grundbegriffe* of the 1915 text as connected to their historical periods and styles of the Renaissance and the Baroque, and certainly not automatically as framework for other periods and styles in the history of art.

⁸¹ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 266, *Principles*, p. 231. "dass sich in allen architektonischen Stilen des Abendlandes gewisse gleichbleibende [incorrectly translated as permanent] Entwicklungen beobachten lassen".

⁸² *Grundbegriffe*, p. 266, *Principles*, p. 231. "Es gibt eine Klassik und einen Barock nicht nur in der neueren Zeit und nicht nur in der antiken Baukunst, sondern auch auf einem so ganz fremdartigen Boden wie der Gotik".

⁸³ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 267, *Principles*, p. 232. "Die Entwicklung wird sich aber nur da, wo die Formen lange genug von Hand zu Hand gegangen sind oder, besser gesagt, wo die Phantasie lebhaft genug sich mit den Formen beschäftigt hat, um die barocken Möglichkeiten herauszulocken". My emphasis.

⁸⁴ Wölfflin (1920), p. 17 (of 1941 publication). "und die Grundbegriffe, wie sie für die neuere Zeit vielleicht zutreffen, sind nicht *talia qualia* auf irgendeine andere Periode zu übertragen, aber das hindert doch nicht, die Frage nach den natürlichen Entwicklungsbedingungen des Sehens immer wieder und überall aufzunehmen".

Stylistic analyses are "essentially and inherently comparative - a statement about patterns of similarity and dissimilarity in groups of artefacts", as Davis recently stated⁸⁵; and in Wölfflin's case, style comprises the integration of the particular (historical examples) into the general (type). In the 1915 text, Wölfflin abstracts and reduces style to a typological totality, as he had in Renaissance and Baroque, in order to connect his five pairs with the dual modes of beholding and depicting in terms of the conventional art historical terminology of his time, namely 'style'. The traditional vocabulary of 'style' describes the place from which Wölfflin developed his concept of style as mode of visualisation. The integration of the individual style of an artist and the style of the time or place constitutes the basis for Wölfflin's terms of distinction between the Classical and the Baroque modes. Just because Wölfflin conceived the *Grundbegriffe* out of the conventional art historical discourse of 'style', his categorical modes are not necessarily identical with the traditional idea of 'style'. True, Wölfflin's notion of style has affinities with the traditional sense of period, personal and collective style. His particular understanding of style as a system of visual discourse remains within the enclosure of the conventional signification. Style became the label for Wölfflin with which the two modes of visibility are presented and co-ordinated.

Wölfflin's theory of style focuses on a distinct aspect of art -the visualisation of form and space by the subject. This conditions a specific investigation of art -in terms of the experiences of beholding and observing of artistic depictions. In the text, style is a concept which acts as a tool, "a heuristic device in [the] process of

⁸⁵ Davis (1998), p. 222.

understanding"⁸⁶ for the viewing subject, which marks differences in the aesthetic experiences of the subject. Wölfflin, unfortunately, did not question the idea of style where it also functions as an object of historical inquiry into the identities, traditions and chronological development of visuality. Had he chosen illustrative examples from the entire history of art, his text might well have emphasised the epistemological and the theoretical dimensions of the *Grundbegriffe* and the text more directly. By not doing this, Wölfflin's text is presented as an investigation into the visual and spatial identities of two specific styles, which provoked criticism of his particular characterisations and descriptions of the styles and periods he focused on. Of course, Wölfflin was unable to select his examples from the entire history of art, because his conceptual project was set within the defined domain of two successive categorical modes of visuality which are not only portrayed as opposite and different, but also governed by a "lawful or regular (*gesetzmässig*)"⁸⁷ progressive direction, leading gradually from one paradigmatic mode to the other. Wölfflin's ideas about visuality are trapped and lost in the generalising label of style.

das Künstlerische

In an article entitled "*Künstler und Publikum* (artist and audience)" of 1930, Wölfflin defined one of the main interests of art history for him, as the analysis of *das Künstlerische*, the artistic.⁸⁸ In order to understand the link between beholding and depicting more fully, this concept of *das Künstlerische*

⁸⁶ McCorkel (1975), p. 43.

⁸⁷ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 6, *Principles*, p. viii.

⁸⁸ Wölfflin: "*Künstler und Publikum* (Artist(s) and Audience)", in *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, Jubiläumsausgabe, 12. Jan. 1930, p. 33. "... anstatt das Interesse der Hauptsache,

will be now explored in more detail.⁸⁹ *Das Künstlerische* is the process which envelops the aesthetic experience of beholding, the organisation and transformation of perceptions -in the visual imagination- culminating in the depiction of form in works of art or architecture by the artist or architect. The notion of *das Künstlerische* provides a means to reflect in more general terms upon the ideas of beholding, visual imagination and depiction, without being limited to a definite history, where the artist and the work are always particulars in a particular place at a particular time. The notion of *das Künstlerische* allows an exploration of the subject's investment in the object, as the creative process in the role of the artist.

The artistic depiction can be related to the perception and vision of the artist. Dittmann criticised Wölfflin for not clearly deciding which vision of the artist he wanted to explore: perception or artistic visibility. Dittmann explained that Wölfflin did not think he had to make the decision or the distinction, because Wölfflin presupposed that "one area always plays into the other".⁹⁰ What for Dittmann was a flaw in Wölfflin's reasoning, is nothing more than Wölfflin's implied theory -precisely that the perceptions and the artistic depictions by the artist are inextricably linked. In the article of 1930, Wölfflin posed the question "*Künstlergeschichte oder Kunstgeschichte* (history of artists or history of art)" not as an either-or possibility, but rather, in my opinion, as implying the concept of *das Künstlerische* in terms of the involvement of the artist as subject, and the work of art as synthesis

nämlich dem Künstlerischen, zuzuwenden. (... instead of directing the interest toward the main issue, das Künstlerische, the artistic)".

⁸⁹ Although the notion of *das Künstlerische* is not directly discussed in the text, it is, I argue, crucially implied.

⁹⁰ Dittmann (1967), p. 57.

of aesthetic perception and production. Several other thinkers have explored the idea of *das Künstlerische* in various directions.

The ideas of Robert Vischer, Konrad Fiedler, and Adolf Hildebrand had influenced Wölfflin's 1915 text considerably. Robert Vischer wrote on the optical feeling of form (*optisches Formgefühl*)⁹¹ and the aesthetic act of beholding⁹² in terms of looking and scanning as opposed to seeing. He defined "'looking/scanning' [*schauen*] as being more conscious than 'seeing' [*sehen*], because it examined the forms dialectically (in a dissolving and reforming manner)".⁹³ In relation to the notion of *das Künstlerische*, Vischer opposes "simple passive 'seeing' [*sehen*] as a physiological process of stimulus reception" to 'looking' (*schauen*) as "an active engagement with the experiential world".⁹⁴ It is *schauen* which produces artistic depiction (*künstlerische Darstellung*).⁹⁵ Vischer also relates this idea to empathy theory, stating that

the artistic reproducing/depicting ... is the adequate result of an interior, dynamic and re-living process. ... To depict this re-living is the hidden purpose of every naive depiction, and the opinion which understands this as a mere reproduction of the original model, is deceived. We therefore see in every relatively moving depiction the genesis of the will of fantasy which was fired by the object, so that even the individual manner of movement of the artist is given in the depiction.⁹⁶

Vischer's language is poetic and dense, and he explored the artist's vision and the resulting artistic depiction without psychological

⁹¹ Robert Vischer: "Über das optische Formgefühl" (1872).

⁹² Robert Vischer: "Der ästhetische Akt und die reine Form" (1874).

⁹³ Vischer (1872), p. 7. "Schauen ist bewusster als Sehen, weil es die Formen dialektisch (d.h. in auflösender und wieder zusammenfassender Weise) untersuchen ... will."

⁹⁴ Rampley (2001), p. 124.

⁹⁵ Vischer (1872), p. 7.

⁹⁶ Vischer (1872), p. 35. "diese künstlerische Nachbilden ... ist die adäquate Resultante eines inneren dynamischen nachlebenden Vorganges. ... Dieses Nachleben darzustellen ist der versteckte Selbstzweck jedes naiven Bildens und die Meinung es handle sich um das Naturvorbild, täuscht sich selbst. Wir erblicken daher an jeder einigermassen schwungvollen Nachbildung die Genesis des am

jargon. "The aesthetically moved person is not having mere perceptions ... he[/she] is viewing [the world et al.] with feeling as total personality and with the help of the visual imagination".⁹⁷ Vischer argued that the transition from perception to visual conception to expression in a work can be summarised as "a realisation of this inner describing and delineating in the artistic depiction".⁹⁸ The implications of empathy theory justify this conception of Vischer. In an internal conjunction or transposition, feelings are produced with an apparently direct emotional participation in the things viewed. The involvement of feeling and participation shape the subsequent artistic depiction. Vischer is presenting his theory of aesthetics within an anthropological discourse⁹⁹; he is describing how human beings and particularly artists see and how they translate these impressions into artistic expressions. This theory provided Wölfflin with an alternative approach to the conventional notion of artistic imitation of objects, nature and the world in works of art. Vischer understood imitation in terms of an artistic transformation, *künstlerisches Umbilden*, as combination of "pure form", "stylisation", the "unconscious power of organic shape" and the "artistic potentialisation and organisation".¹⁰⁰ Ferretti summarised that

Gegenstände entzündeten Phantasiewillens, so dass sich im Vortrage sogar die individuelle Bewegungsart des Künstlers offenbart."

⁹⁷ Vischer (1874), p. 46. My emphasis. "der ästhetisch gestimmte Mensch macht keine blossen Wahrnehmungen ... er sieht fühlend als ganze Persönlichkeit und zwar mit Hilfe der Vorstellung."

⁹⁸ Vischer (1874), p. 48. "Eine Realisation dieses inneren Beschreibens und Umreissens ist die künstlerische Darstellung".

⁹⁹ This aspect is also one of the main themes of Wölfflin's involvement in art history. As the archival documents and notebook entries show, Wölfflin was interested in the *kulturhistorische* dimension of 'anthropology'; his concern for the subject, the *Mensch*, was a pivotal dimension of all his art historical explorations.

¹⁰⁰ Vischer (1872), p. 38f. "Die reine Form und die Stilisierung", "Die unbewusste Kraft der organischen Gestalt und die künstlerische Potenzierung (Organisierung)".

for Robert Vischer the highest aim of art is to represent a conflict of forces in movement: the physiological one of sight and the nervous system, and the other one of vital corporeal and psychic feeling, the spiritual energy of the imagination and the regulative and harmonising will of fantasy.¹⁰¹

Wölfflin had drawn upon Vischer's ideas for his doctoral dissertation of 1886, and also for the 1915 text. In a notebook entry from 1886, Wölfflin wrote: "How do artists see? What do they depict? Mostly only a tiny section".¹⁰² This reference shows that Wölfflin was concerned with the artist as a subject who perceives and depicts; the artistic depiction merely presents a fraction of the artist's visual imagination (*Vorstellung*) and perception (*Wahrnehmung*). Perception and depiction are united in the artist who views the world in terms of visually expressive possibilities to be captured in the work of art.

Konrad Fiedler worked on similar aspects of *das Künstlerische*. In his theory of pure visibility, the concept of *das Künstlerische* has replaced a more general notion of art.¹⁰³ Fiedler oriented artistic perception close to the human artistic (creative) process. Underlying Fiedler's theoretical explorations was his idea that reality is formed and created by the active involvement of the subject and the consciousness, on the one hand, through language and naming, and, on the other hand, through the depiction of "visibility/visuality and the visual (*Sichtbarkeit and das Sichtbare*)".¹⁰⁴ The artist gathers and produces visual 'reality'. This is not an idealisation or an imitation of 'reality'. The artist transforms his/her perceptions into depictions in the work of art, and thereby creates visual 'reality' in the form of art. Art is both the creation and expression of visual and cognitive

¹⁰¹ Ferretti (1989), p. 21.

¹⁰² Notebook 12 (1886), p. 15r. "Wie sehen die Künstler? Was stellen sie dar? Meist nur einen ganz kleinen Ausschnitt".

¹⁰³ Bauer, Herman (1976), p. 24.

¹⁰⁴ Fiedler (1887) "Über den Ursprung der künstlerischen Tätigkeit", e.g. p. 335.

knowledge. Visible 'reality' (*sichtbare Wirklichkeit*) is based on "the development and formation of the visual imagination (*die Entwicklung und Bildung von Vorstellungen*)" of the subject.¹⁰⁵ This "visual worldview (*sichtbares Weltbild*)"¹⁰⁶ conditions visual exploration and the general perception of the surrounding world and existence. The artist recognises and comprehends human consciousness and being through the work of art. The moment visual perception is captured in language, according to Fiedler, it no longer pertains to the category of the visual.¹⁰⁷ The artist has to depict his/her visual perceptions in visual form, as art. The visual imagination (*Vorstellungen*) of the subject is not fixed but is characterised by a continuing "emerging, becoming and a dissolving (*Werdendes, Entstehendes und Vergehendes*)" of visual images.¹⁰⁸ Fiedler described the creation and depiction of these visual images which capture 'reality' as a foremost activity of the artist.¹⁰⁹ Receptivity and activity are the same in the artist for Fiedler. The engagement of the artist is no mere mimetic reproduction of nature or of the perceived world¹¹⁰. We can not speak of model (*Vorbild*) and copy (*Nachbild*)¹¹¹. Fiedler specified that "artistic activity is neither slavish imitation, nor arbitrary invention, but rather free depiction" in the sense of shaping, forming, arranging, and structuring.¹¹² In the co-ordination and interplay of the perception by the eye and the depiction by the hand, the artist creates

¹⁰⁵ Fiedler (1887), p. 255.

¹⁰⁶ Fiedler (1887), p. 257.

¹⁰⁷ Fiedler (1887), p. 256f.

¹⁰⁸ Fiedler (1887), p. 229f.

¹⁰⁹ Fiedler (1887), p. 311. "*Die Hervorbringung und Darstellung eines solchen Wirklichkeitsbesitzes haben wir als den eigentlichen Sinn der künstlerischen Tätigkeit bezeichnet*".

¹¹⁰ Fiedler (1887), p. 284.

¹¹¹ Fiedler (1887), p. 274f.

something new.¹¹³ The hand is the mechanism of the visual imagination in one continuous process which began with the eye and perception.¹¹⁴ In the artist mental (visual imagination) and bodily actions (beholding and depiction) are intertwined. The bodily aspect of the relation of perception to depiction lies in the co-ordination of eye and hand, which is pivotal for Wölfflin's insistence on the incorporation of the subject, of the subject's body, particularly the eyes, in the understanding of the object. Artistic depiction is the product of two phases: first perception then apperception, as Fiedler explained.¹¹⁵ He emphasised that this must be understood as one process¹¹⁶: the depiction and the expression of the visual imagination which was initiated by perception is one single operation of *das Künstlerische*, functioning as the register to visualise life, the world, existence, etc.. The ability of the artist to treat and transform actively ("*umbilden*"¹¹⁷) impressions, based on a heightened consciousness of 'reality', is what makes and defines this process and the resulting depiction as art and artistic, *künstlerisch*.¹¹⁸ The work of art exemplifies an "artistic understanding of the world (*künstlerisches Verständniss der Welt*)"¹¹⁹. Artistic desire (*der künstlerische Trieb*) is a desire for knowledge, and art is a product of the realisation of visual knowledge (*Erkenntnisresultat*).¹²⁰ Fiedler's theories are reflected in Wölfflin's conception of perception and depiction. *Das Künstlerische* functions within the subjectivity of the

¹¹² Fiedler (1876), p. 50. "Die künstlerische Tätigkeit ist weder sklavische Nachahmung, noch willkürliche Erfindung, sondern freie Gestaltung".

¹¹³ Fiedler (1887), p. 275.

¹¹⁴ Fiedler (1887), p. 267.

¹¹⁵ Fiedler (1887), p. 251.

¹¹⁶ Fiedler (1887), p. 273.

¹¹⁷ Fiedler (1887), p. 322.

¹¹⁸ Fiedler (1887), p. 307.

¹¹⁹ Fiedler (1876), "Über die Beurteilung von Werken der bildenden Kunst", p. 28, 59.

¹²⁰ Fiedler (1876), p. 78.

artist as a psychological process of an engagement with the world. Paret concluded that Fiedler's 'artistic worldview' theme in the inquiry into *das Künstlerische* provided a point of continuity: while peoples and cultures, as well as individuals are different and change through time, the artist's creative activity, his/her transformation of impressions into expressions, what he also called the "*künstlerische Urerlebnis*"¹²¹, always takes place.¹²² By defining the work of art as the interface of perception and depiction, Fiedler, and in turn Wölfflin, initiated a new version of art history. While Fiedler produced texts in the sphere of aesthetics and philosophical speculation, Wölfflin appropriated these ideas for his art historical thinking.¹²³ Boehm argued that it was Fiedler's discourse which made this new approach to art history possible, by making art an autonomous field of forms of visualisation (*Anschauungsformen*) and modes of vision (*Sehformen*).¹²⁴ Fiedler prepared "the theoretical horizon for a conception of art history" which superseded the conventional, "purely biographical and physiognomic scholarship".¹²⁵ Wölfflin mirrored some of these theoretical speculations in his 1915 text.

¹²¹ Paret (1921-22), p. 362. Difficult to translate, possibly as the 'primal experience of the artistic'.

¹²² Paret (1921-22), p. 328, 360. Similarly, Wölfflin saw the depictions and movements of figures, and clothing change, but the field of the body and bodiliness remained a continuity through time.

¹²³ Wölfflin knew Fiedler personally since 1889, when they met in Munich, as Gantner informed us (Gantner, 1959, p. 938). Gantner, however, mentioned to Boehm that there is no direct evidence for an immediate -literary- reception of Fiedler by Wölfflin in the archival material (Boehm, 1971, p. LIV, footnote 88). The content of the 1915 text can be related to the thinking and the texts by Fiedler, even if there is no material evidence for this to be found in the archives because their ideas fundamentally circle around similar problems and concerns, and although there are systematic differences between Fiedler's and Wölfflin's use of the issue, as Boehm noted (Boehm, 1971, p. LVIII). Interestingly, Mundt directly alluded to this intellectual connection between Wölfflin and Fiedler, when he commented that: "acknowledging one's debts to other writers does not seem to be a German habit. Wölfflin offers no [quoted] reference to Fiedler", and stating that: "Wölfflin, clearly, owes much to Fiedler. His five categories are all visual ones" (Mundt, 1959, p. 306; 305; my emphasis).

¹²⁴ Boehm (1971), p. LVIII.

¹²⁵ Boehm (1971), p. LVIII.

Paired examples of works¹²⁶ were used to illustrate an understanding of art in terms of the visual link of perception with depiction by the artist. Furthermore, Wölfflin employed implications of Fielder's aesthetic theories when he explored the notion of *das Künstlerische*. For Christoffel, Wölfflin's examinations can be situated within "a pure *Wissenschaft des Künstlerischen*".¹²⁷ Wölfflin was interested in artists, though not in their biography. He had developed an alternative, *Kunstgeschichte ohne Namen*, art history without names. In Wölfflin's text of 1899, *Die klassische Kunst (Classic Art)*, although the book was presented as chapters on individual artists¹²⁸, he did so without focusing on biography. The 1899 text rather, as Wölfflin explains in the 1898 preface, explored the "larger theme of 'art'" and "the artistic content", which points to a more aesthetic exploration; he summarises that "it would be natural if every historical monograph would include a part of aesthetics".¹²⁹ Wölfflin's idea of a *Kunstgeschichte ohne Namen* points in the direction of leaving the biographies of individual artists behind, for the analysis of works with focus on the aesthetic experience of the subject, which means of both, artist and viewer. In this attitude to art history, *das Künstlerische* functions as a "balance between an individualistic and a collective conception of history", as Strich has argued in relation to a *Kunstgeschichte ohne Namen*, as well as a balance "between the freedom and irrationality of creative production [of the individual artist] and the conditional aspect of the wider historical

¹²⁶ Works which show similar motifs, poses or compositions, but which are differently visually constructed.

¹²⁷ Christoffel (1944), p. 143.

¹²⁸ Leonardo, Michelangelo up to 1520, Raphael, Fra Bartolomeo, Andrea del Sarto, Michelangelo after 1520.

¹²⁹ Wölfflin, *Die klassische Kunst*, 1898, p. 8 in 10th edition of 1983.

development", e.g. of time, place or culture.¹³⁰ In a defensive article "*In eigener Sache. Zur Rechtfertigung meiner Kunstgeschichtlichen Grundbegriffe*" (1920), Wölfflin mentioned that a *Kunstgeschichte ohne Namen* attempts to "present something which lays underneath the individual".¹³¹ This dimension "underneath the individual" constitutes a certain abstraction from the specific artist and centres the focus on the creative process of the artist which precisely links the aesthetic experience of beholding with depicting. In the 1920 article, Wölfflin discussed a criticism of his 'art history without names', namely that "the most valuable is the personality in art history", to which he responded that he was thoroughly misunderstood in this matter. He insisted that his inquiry was deeply concerned with the subject, in both the roles of artist and viewer¹³², even if not with the individual biographical content or anecdotes of the artist's life. In 1932, in a notebook, he referred to this criticism of the *Principles*: "misunderstanding: as if the individual should be eliminated".¹³³ For Wölfflin, the individual artist was conceptualised as a general and *menschliches*, human subject. Uitz argued similarly that Wölfflin was able to approach "the secret of the individual (*das Geheimnis des Individuellen*)" in general terms with his rich language and terminology¹³⁴, that is with terms belonging to general fields of perception, beholding, the visual imagination, and depiction. The notion of *das Künstlerische* operates here precisely as an aesthetic

¹³⁰ Strich (1956), p. 24.

¹³¹ Wölfflin (1920) "*In eigener Sache. Zur Rechtfertigung meiner 'Kunstgeschichtlichen Grundbegriffe'*" (In Personal Matters. In Justification of my 'Principles of Art History'), in *Gedanken zur Kunstgeschichte* published by Wölfflin in 1941. P. 15. "... die Absicht, etwas zu Darstellung zu bringen, das unter dem Individuellen liegt". Wölfflin's emphasis.

¹³² Wölfflin (1920) "*In eigener Sache*", p. 15 (of 1941 publication). Unfortunately, Wölfflin does not cite the source for this particular criticism of the 1915 text.

¹³³ Notebook 73 (Nov. - Dec. 1932), p. 16r. "Missverständnis: als ob Individuum ausgeschalten sein sollte".

generalisation of the experiences (perception and depicting) of the artist.

In his notebooks, Wölfflin commented on the importance of the activity of painting and drawing in order to train, form and educate the eye and aesthetic vision.¹³⁵ He wrote that he could not imagine to practice art history without being able to draw.¹³⁶ In 1886/87 he wanted to focus on learning to "draw and see better", as a notebook entry tells us.¹³⁷ Both activities point to the reception and perception, as well as to the production and depiction of *das Künstlerische*. Wölfflin's notes continue to relate to the thinking of his University teacher Heinrich Brunn. Brunn had described the act of drawing as the "building and formation of the eye which results in a constructive understanding of form".¹³⁸ Drawing was seen by Brunn, and Wölfflin, as an active *study* of form, as a contemplation of form on paper. Brunn made clear that he did not mean drawing in the sense of copying or imitating, but rather as comprehending the difference between "how [things] are and how they appear to the eye".¹³⁹ Works of art are characterised by their artistic depiction (*künstlerische Gestaltung*), and as such, Brunn also indicated their role in shaping and forming the education of the eye (*Bildung des Auges*): that is the eye of both the artist and of the viewer of art.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁴ Utitz (1929), p. 24.

¹³⁵ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 138: "*Unbedingt zeichnen und malen lernen. Letzte Gelegenheit das Auge zu bilden.* (Really have to learn to draw and paint. Last chance to form the eye)". Wölfflin is writing about himself here, but this quote can also be seen to indicate the significance he attests to this kind of activity and skill for an art historical understanding in more general terms.

¹³⁶ Notebook 15 (1887/88), p. 24r. "*Kunstgeschichte zu treiben ohne selbst zu zeichnen, scheint mir unmöglich*".

¹³⁷ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 157: "*Ich muss mein Handwerkszeug noch besser in Stand halten. Zeichnen. Sehn.* (I have to know my tools better. Drawing. Seeing)".

¹³⁸ Brunn (1885), p. 14. "*Ausbildung des Auges ... Verständniss der Form... konstruktiven Charakter*"

¹³⁹ Brunn (1885), p. 14.

¹⁴⁰ Brunn (1885), p. 17.

Interestingly, Freitag mentioned that "well into the 1920s the ability to draw was a requirement for students seeking admission to Wölfflin's seminar".¹⁴¹ In 1910, Wölfflin published an article entitled "*Über das Zeichnen (on Drawing)*", in which he emphasised the relevance of drawing in the difference between understanding through a visual imagination as opposed to thinking with language and intellectual concepts.¹⁴² This can be related to Fiedler's distinction between visual and linguistic knowledge of reality. It implies the idea of a specific training and the extension of the visual faculties through drawing and sketching.¹⁴³ The exercise of depiction in drawing can be considered as access and insight into the artistic process. Wölfflin's notebook entries, the 1910 article, and the references from Brunn pertain to the notion that the experience of drawing and sketching is able to effect, influence and make the viewer aware of the decisions and problems (proportions, symmetries, shadow and light, composition, ...), indeed, of all the visual operations of the artist, when looking at a work. The experience of drawing will prompt a different understanding of the vision of an artist.

A drawing (*die Zeichnung*) is also conceived as a dimension between empirical perceptions of the artist and the final depiction in the completed work of art. Already in *Renaissance and Baroque*, Wölfflin noted that "the most immediate or direct expression of an

¹⁴¹ Freitag (1979/1980), p. 120.

¹⁴² Wölfflin's 1910 article is printed in his *Kleine Schriften* (1946), pp. 164-165. It is, of course, difficult to gather what Wölfflin understood precisely by 'thinking', but, more importantly here, he distinguished this thinking (most likely seen in intellectual terms) to the visual mechanisms in the mind. The visual imagination as a domain of images is differentiated from thinking in words and language, but at the same time, this visual register is acknowledged as significant as linguistic reasoning.

¹⁴³ Drawing is taken here as rather more often undertaken (also as doodling or quick memory aid of views and objects) than the activity of painting with brush, paint, canvas, et al.. Drawing can also be seen in the context of visually capturing people and surroundings, in the age before everybody had a camera and took pictures.

artist's intention is the sketch".¹⁴⁴ Wölfflin stated in the 1915 text that there is a "connection between painting and drawing".¹⁴⁵ Drawing constitutes an intermediary and preparatory stage in the production of the painting. It is similar, yet in a different register to the relation of an architectural plan to a building. A drawing is the depiction of the visual contemplation of the artist while in the process of composing the final version of the work.¹⁴⁶ As a visual study of details and possible compositions, a rehearsal of postures, gestures, and groupings, the drawing is a stage in the artistic process of depicting. A drawing is the visualisation, or in contemporary terms the diagramming and mapping of elements, also called "prefiguration (*Praefiguration*)" by Gantner¹⁴⁷.

In the 1915 text, Wölfflin analysed drawings as directly illustrative of the artist's personal ideas and manner of depiction. In his discussion of the first pair of *Grundbegriffe*, linear – painterly, he interpreted the visual modes of drawings as primary expressive statements of the artist's individual way to see and draw the world, portraits, figures and landscapes.¹⁴⁸ Drawings present the tactile and visual values of the vision of the artists more directly, meaning more roughly and schematically, than paintings because of the usual lack of colour and the more pronounced contrasts of the drawn lines and shaded areas. Wölfflin compared a nude by Dürer with one by

¹⁴⁴ *Ren & Bar*, p. 16/30. "Den unmittelbarsten Ausdruck der künstlerischen Intention findet man in den Skizzen".

¹⁴⁵ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 56, *Principles*, p. 41; translated as 'relation', whereas Wölfflin's term "Zusammenhang" is more intense than a mere "Beziehung" (=relation), he means a connection, in the sense of a correlation or an interrelation.

¹⁴⁶ Although the state of completion has been an issue of debate since the 19th century, for artists, critics and historians, for the two centuries Wölfflin explored, the notion of a final or completed work seems fairly conventional. With the exception of Michelangelo's sculptures.

¹⁴⁷ Gantner (1955-1957), p. 145; (1960), p. 90.

¹⁴⁸ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 46ff., *Principles*, p. 32ff.

Rembrandt.¹⁴⁹ Although Wölfflin did not comment directly on the role of the drawing in terms of visual immediacy of the artist's perception, the sketch can be seen as the gathering of information of the drawn object(s) and as a rapid capture of a certain atmosphere. While Dürer's Eva is a three-dimensional figure in front of a dark, flat background, Rembrandt's nude participates in her spatial surroundings which makes this figure appear to have more depth and mass. Wölfflin mentions the fact that Dürer's sketch is a preparatory drawing for a copperplate engraving or etching and in this capacity it represents a more detailed construction ("*sorgfältig durchgeführt*") including a more composed pose of the figure, while Rembrandt's study seems to be from life; and even the diversity of drawing tools, pen and chalk, create different types of drawings; but, he argued, these were only secondary concerns.¹⁵⁰ The drawing is a schematisation of the composition or of individual details and elements, figures and objects, and as such has an immediate effect as the depiction of the artist's visual imagination, attitude and understanding of the depicted form. The drawing provided valuable material for analysis to detect and emphasise the modes of visual depiction of the artists and of their spatial aesthetics in regard to the five pairs of *Grundbegriffe*. Wölfflin included the discussion of drawings in most of the chapters on the paired conceptual terms.¹⁵¹ And, as Gantner noted, Wölfflin thought about illustrating his text exclusively with drawings.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁹ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 46f., *Principles*, p. 33f.

¹⁵⁰ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 46, *Principles*, p. 32.

¹⁵¹ Except for chapter three on 'closed and open form'.

¹⁵² See biographical summary of Wölfflin by Gantner in: Wölfflin (1961), ed. by Gantner, p. 62. "*erwog er den Plan, dieses Buch nur mit Zeichnungen zu illustrieren, dass heisst mit denjenigen Dokumenten, die den 'Vorstellungsformen' am nächsten stehn und die Intention des Künstlers oft am reinsten wiedergeben*".

The theme of drawing has served here three functions. Firstly, drawings are an interstitial aspect, stage and medium of the artistic process: within the artist's visual perception, visual imagination and contemplation and final visual depiction of the work. The drawing makes a visual exploration of the artistic process from perception to depiction visible to a certain extent. The drawing provides access to the process of transformation and composition of perceptions into depictions because various versions or choices are played out. The artist is in the middle of turning his/her visual ideas into a depiction. This interpretation hangs, of course, on traditional notions of drawing, acting as the preparation for the final work, as well as on the aspects of the speed of drawing, and the material presence of the object or figure which implies the depiction of the artist's visual perception and direct observation. These parameters were more or less generally accepted in the periods Wölfflin explored in his text. However, a new status for drawings emerged in Wölfflin's time, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, namely as autonomous works of art, rather than solely as preparatory studies. Wölfflin's use of drawings as artistic depictions in his analysis places him within a changing framework of the significance of drawings. Secondly, drawings are considered to be authentic artistic depictions which can be analysed as works where artists express their personal mode of vision and perception. Wölfflin examined aspects of the graphic technique of drawing in detail in his 1905 text, Die Kunst Albrecht Dürers, for instance. And finally, the activity of drawing is a performance in which the artistic process can be experienced, potentially providing insight into the domains of visual perception, transformations in the imagination and the depiction of this visual

contemplation as art, as a production of *das Künstlerische*.¹⁵³ For Wölfflin this activity allows the viewer a certain access to the artist's creative process, and an awareness of the domain of his/her internal and mental visuality with which depictions are constructed. A further inquiry into the operation of transition and metamorphosis of perception into depiction was undertaken by Hildebrand.

Adolf Hildebrand published his text *Das Problem der Form in der bildenden Kunst* in 1893.¹⁵⁴ Wölfflin mentioned Hildebrand's analysis in his notebook of 1899/1900.¹⁵⁵ Dittmann asserted that it was Hildebrand (and his text) which directed Wölfflin's "concentration on the specifically artistic in the work of art".¹⁵⁶ And Wölfflin affirmed Hildebrand's influence directly in the preface to his 1899 text, *Die klassische Kunst*.¹⁵⁷ Hildebrand's text can be seen as a concrete description of artistic perception and depiction. *Das Künstlerische* transformed a receptive to a productive vision in the artist¹⁵⁸. Hildebrand distinguished between two types of form in relation to the subject: how a form appears (*Erscheinung*) through beholding and perception, and how a form is delineated and presented in its artistic depiction (*Darstellung*).¹⁵⁹ Form in general is a

¹⁵³ It should be noted here that this entire exploration of the depiction of perception by an artist is a different approach than the traditional idea of art as the (mere) imitation of nature. The focus is not on the copying of a reality, but rather on the experience of a reality which is then rendered in artistic terms. *Das Künstlerische* is not solely regarded as aspect of skill, talent or genius in the artist who creates a (nearly) perfect visual copy. The artist's active engagement and involvement in the process of transformation of perception into depiction is part and parcel of the concept of *das Künstlerische*.

¹⁵⁴ Wölfflin knew Hildebrand personally since 1889, when he visited the sculptor in his atelier in Florence. Gantner (1966), p. 9.

¹⁵⁵ Notebook 36 (March 1899 - Autumn 1900), p. 61v.

¹⁵⁶ Dittmann (1967), p. 67. "Konzentration auf das spezifisch Künstlerische im Kunstwerk".

¹⁵⁷ Wölfflin (1899), p. 7f. [of 1983, 10th edition] (preface to the first edition).

¹⁵⁸ For Hildebrand, 'artist' implies the painter and the sculptor, not necessarily the architect.

¹⁵⁹ Hildebrand (1893), p. 227 [in English translation, as part of *Empathy, Form, and Space: Problems of German Aesthetics, 1873-1893*, ed. by H.F. Mallgrave and E. Ikonomou, 1994].

fundamentally "spatial idea" for Hildebrand, who was a sculptor; he wrote: "the *perceiver* sees or spatially reads the appearance quite unconsciously, and he/[she] receives the visual impression in order to form a spatial idea".¹⁶⁰ The artist "translates", "processes and clarifies", and "captures" a "visual image" of the abstracted, unchanging, and what Hildebrand called "inherent form (*Daseinsform*)", into the "effective form (*Wirkungsform*)" of the artistic depiction.¹⁶¹ The visual image in the imagination is set in a "spatial continuum" and a "kinesthetic framework"¹⁶², because space and movement characterise the perception by the artist, and the subsequent artistic depiction of the spatial content of form, as well as the experience of perception by the viewer. The spatial dimension of form implies how elements relate to each other in all the processes of perception, visualisation and depiction. Hildebrand included the role of the subject as viewer into his speculations, albeit with far less attention than he gave to the artist. In Hildebrand's terms, Wölfflin's five pairs can be understood as two different spatial modes of experience, visualisation and depiction in painting, sculpture, and architecture.

Wölfflin summarised the theme of his 1915 text in the 1930 article '*Künstler und Publikum*', as a "comparative presentation ... of the difference in conceptions of space".¹⁶³ Hans Heinz Holz argued for this view of the *Grundbegriffe* in 1965, in an article celebrating 50 years of Wölfflin's *Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe*. For Holz the connection of the five pairs lies in their relation to the visual

¹⁶⁰ Hildebrand (1893), p. 231 [in 1994 English edition]. Italicised emphasis by Hildebrand; underlined emphasis by me.

¹⁶¹ Hildebrand (1893), p. 232f. [in 1994 English edition].

¹⁶² Hildebrand (1893), p. 238f. [in 1994 English edition].

contemplation and conception of space, as a system of coordination of forms and bodies, in the depiction.¹⁶⁴ Eckl also suggested that the *Grundbegriffe* as 'categories of beholding' (*Kategorien der Anschauung*) and due to their relation to Hildebrand's aspect of the visual artistic depiction of forms in space, are characteristics of spatial experiences,¹⁶⁵ of the artist (perception followed by depiction) and of the viewer (perception of a depiction). The experience of space can be related to the bodily aesthetic experience of empathy theory as Wölfflin developed it in his doctoral dissertation of 1886. Lurz argued for the continuous effects of empathy theory in Wölfflin's thinking throughout his life.¹⁶⁶ But, Lurz did not mention the experience of space as the link between the 1886 and the 1915 texts. The conception of space was crucial for empathy theorists, Lipps, for instance, treated the topic in a long section on *Raumästhetik*, the aesthetics of space, in his 1903 text.¹⁶⁷ "A sense of form is gained [by artist and viewer] by the kinesthetic experience, the real or imagined movement necessary to interpret the appearance things present to the eye", as Adrian Forty summarised Hildebrand's notion of spatial aesthetics.¹⁶⁸ Hildebrand's, and Wölfflin's, theory of perception and depiction is based on the spatial experience of the artist, the spatial visuality of the process of artistic contemplation and imagination, and the

¹⁶³ Wölfflin (1930), p. 33 (this article is also published in the *Kleine Schriften*, pp. 177-180). "die vergleichende Betrachtung ... Verschiedenheit der Raumkonzeption".

¹⁶⁴ Holz (1965), article in *National-Zeitung Basel*, (Sonntagsbeilage) 12. Dec. 1965. "Das Gemeinsame an Wölfflins fünf Schema-Paaren liegt darin, dass sie sich auf die visuelle Auffassung des Raumes in der Bild-Fläche beziehen – Raum hier vor aller metaphysischen Interpretation als das System des Zusammenseins von Körpern verstanden".

¹⁶⁵ Eckl (1996), p. 194.

¹⁶⁶ Lurz (1981), p. 187ff. Lurz argued for an essentially continuous presence of Empathy Theory in Wölfflin's thinking, as exemplified in the 1915 text, with reference to his 1886 dissertation, in particular the impressions of repose and movement.

¹⁶⁷ Lipps (1903), p. 224-292.

artistic depiction of form(s) in spatial terms¹⁶⁹ which are in turn perceived in spatial terms by the viewer. Spatiality, as experienced and visually organised and depicted bodiliness, becomes the analytical topic of the subtext of Wölfflin's 1915 text. This interpretation considers the five pairs of *Grundbegriffe* as exploring two modes of spatial experiences and effects, in terms of Wölfflin's notions of forms of perception (*Auffassungsformen*, *Anschauungsformen*) and of depiction (*Darstellungsformen*). The five pairs can be interpreted as indices of two different modes of spatial organisation:

1. linear – painterly: the overall spatial effect of the artistic depiction, the characteristics of the edges of form and transitions of forms and space (concrete - diffused), for Holz "how bodies are bordered by space"¹⁷⁰;
2. plane – depth: the relation of elements within the framework of the formation of spatial depth (sequences of discernible planes - continuous depth), the elements are organised as "spatial content", as Hildebrand called it¹⁷¹, "moments of order in space"¹⁷²;
3. closed – open form: the relation of the entire composition of elements in regard to the spatial frame of the work, the form of the extracted part from the "spatial continuum"¹⁷³, shape, proportions and dominant axis, "the relation of the totality of the work to limitless space"¹⁷⁴;

¹⁶⁸ Forty (2000), p. 159.

¹⁶⁹ The periods Wölfflin has chosen include 'only' depictions of forms in space; the questioning and problematisation of space in artistic depiction began in the 19th century. And Wölfflin's thematisation of this issue, for him the duality of spatial values, is one form of exploring the problem of space and the subject.

¹⁷⁰ Holz (1965). "wie Körper sich gegen den Raum begrenzen".

¹⁷¹ Hildebrand (1893), p. 239 [in 1994 English edition].

¹⁷² Holz (1965). "die Momente der Anordnung im Raum".

¹⁷³ Hildebrand (1893), p. 238 [in 1994 English edition].

¹⁷⁴ Holz (1965). "das Verhältnis des Bildganzen zum unendlichen Raum".

4. multiple – absolute unity: the relation of elements to the whole of the composition and arrangement in space (co-ordination - subordination), the positions and directions of forms in the spatial field;

5. absolute – relative clarity: the relation of the boundaries of elements to their spatial surroundings (strict limit - hazy, porous outline), "the product of all spatial relations"¹⁷⁵.

The five pairs designate two ways to perceive, organise and depict space.¹⁷⁶ This interpretation echoes Eckl's; he identified the modes as mechanisms to register the "structuring and formation of space" in his analysis of Wölfflin's *Kategorien der Anschauung* (categories of beholding) in relation to Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*.¹⁷⁷ For Wölfflin, spatiality is an experience by the subject and a conspicuously visual experience of depictions, although the experience is processed by the whole body. "Uniformities arise", Summers has noted, "because images are always embodied and share real space with those who see and use them"¹⁷⁸. Spatial modes of perception and depiction have significance in the historicity of the ways in which these experiences are captured. Wölfflin had located the two categorical modes of the *Grundbegriffe* (Classical – Baroque) in history, thereby distinguishing the two styles of the Renaissance and of the Baroque, while also

¹⁷⁵ Holz (1965). "das Ergebnis der Summe aller hier aufgeführten Raumverhältnisse".

¹⁷⁶ Cf. the text, *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe*, by Alexandre Koyré, where the philosophical and scientific changes of ideas and conceptions of space are discussed in the same time period which Wölfflin explored. Koyré's text is not engaging with spatial aesthetics as constituted by artists and in artworks, i.e. as explored by Wölfflin. Nevertheless, the general statement and description of a changing understanding of space relate to Wölfflin's 1915 text. Wölfflin investigated works of art, sculpture and architecture, while Koyré examined texts by philosophers and scientists; both investigated conceptions of space, albeit in different fields of exemplifications.

¹⁷⁷ Eckl (1996), p. 241. "... bezogen auf die Gliederung des Raumes".

¹⁷⁸ Summers (1989), p. 405.

exploring the fact that spatiality is an implicit quality of the visual imagination. It was precisely Wölfflin's aim, I want to argue, to integrate abstract, conceptual terms into concrete history, to understand the perception and depiction of space as a historical pattern.

Space perception has been formalised in pictorial depiction and architecture since the implementation of central perspective in the Renaissance. Holly, for instance, argued for a particular rationalisation of sight in perspective constructions which was perfected in the 15th century.¹⁷⁹ In the perspectival system of visibility a certain viewer is always implied. "Perspective", Berger noted, "makes the single eye the centre of the visible world".¹⁸⁰ "A Renaissance painting", Holly argued, "is designed to be seen; it is a crystallisation of a certain deliberate viewing of the world" and of forms in a defined spatial framework; "it implies the involvement of the spectator who is the absent force, or even the unseen orchestrator," of this "totalising scheme of spatial construction."¹⁸¹ Wölfflin observed in an early notebook that "artistic techniques determine the visuality of the eye [of the artist]. The artist tends to understand and interpret nature according to the technique he/[she] knows".¹⁸² The viewing subject is an integral part of the work, and in this sense, a negation of the separation of subject and object. The pictorial, sculptural, and architectural spatiality of works from the 16th and 17th centuries double the viewing subject's visuality and bodiliness. The specific artworks Wölfflin explored, incorporated

¹⁷⁹ Holly (1990), p. 392.

¹⁸⁰ Berger (1972), p. 16.

¹⁸¹ Holly (1990), p. 383.

¹⁸² Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 64. "*dass die Technik das Sehen des Auges bestimmt. Der Künstler ist geneigt die Natur gleich in der Technik aufzufassen die er kennt*".

a viewing, and thereby an engaged subject from the beginning, as Holly's research suggests. The art objects function within a media-theory in which the perception and visual contemplation of the subject is formalised and made visible.¹⁸³

Wölfflin engaged with this issue of 'spatial aesthetics' over a long period. He approached it from the side of the artwork, although concerned with the implications for the subject, when he asked in a notebook: "what are the lines saying, how do they say it?".¹⁸⁴ How do lines organise, depict and present forms and space? It seems that for Wölfflin it is not important *what* an image is saying, but rather *how* it is saying it. Wölfflin was interested in how the spatial field was organised and constructed, and how forms operate spatially.¹⁸⁵

This spatial aesthetics involves the subject in Wölfflin's analysis. In the 1915 text, Wölfflin's *Grundbegriffe* position the subject, as artist and viewer, visually in the field of the object, in order to investigate a communication between subjects and object: artist, art work and viewer. In an 1886 notebook, Wölfflin conceived the *wissenschaftliche* treatment of art with a psychological basis: looking at the artist and at the viewer.¹⁸⁶ Now for the subject, space is a category through which the subject asserts a sense of position and identity in the world, particularly through the spatial experience of those areas. Space is an element in the being and existence of the subject, as

¹⁸³ Wiesing (1997), p. 153.

¹⁸⁴ Notebook 10 (1885), p. 25. "Was sagen Linien, wie sagen sie es?"

¹⁸⁵ There are, of course, differences in the spatial structures pertaining to painting, sculptures or architecture. Although these media employ distinct organisational mechanisms to formulate space with or in the object, they nevertheless all register space and spatiality; and this is a significant aspect in the present interpretation of Wölfflin's *Grundbegriffe* as spatial aesthetics of the subject.

¹⁸⁶ Notebook 12 (1886), p. 52. "Wissenschaftliche Behandlung der Kunst fordert 1. Psycholog.[ische] Grundlage, A. Beim Künstler, B. Beim Geniessenden".

previously outlined with reference to Schopenhauer in chapter one. Space is also a register within artistic depictions; here it is the category by which the work and the experience of the work can be analysed by the subject. Wölfflin developed a theory of spatial vision, where the visual space in a work allows access for the imagination to move through and be in it, and experience the space with the body in visual terms. When viewing and analysing a spatial composition with the help of Wölfflin's five pairs, one can read the space with the body virtually: as imagined territory or area for the body to have experiences of the spatial effects and forms. It is a semiotic interpretation of spatial signs, and their relations which make up, construct and present the spatial dimension and organisation of the work.

Late in his life, Wölfflin remarked in a notebook that looking for general concepts and types is awkward in view of the fact that art, *das Künstlerische*, is based upon the individual: the individual subject and the individual object.¹⁸⁷ The two modes and the five pairs illustrate Wölfflin's search for theoretical but historically situated terms, while, at the same time, they incorporate the singular: the work, the artist, the viewer, all set in relation to spatial vision. The dimensions of *das Künstlerische* demonstrate that the artwork, the object is enveloped by the two functions of the subject, as artist and as viewer, particularly when the issue of visual spatiality is explored.

¹⁸⁷ Notebook 84 (Oct. 1938-March 1943), p. 10r. "Befangenheit meiner Generation: das Suchen nach allgemeinen Begriffen, nach Typen. Und doch steckt die Kunst im Einzelnen".

two modes

To recapitulate, the conception of the five pairs of *Grundbegriffe* is incorporated within the two categorical modes, generalised and historicised as the Classical and the Baroque types, and situated by Wölfflin as the differences between two systems of depiction and perception of art works of the 16th and the 17th centuries. The notions of difference and contrast, juxtaposition and dichotomy of the two modes of the 1915 text reflect the 1888 text, *Renaissance and Baroque*. In the *Principles*, Wölfflin takes up and develops his earlier notions on a more explicit theoretical level.

The difference of the two modes (Classical - Baroque) is presented within three diverse forms of differentiation, firstly as contrast, secondly as a spectrum and range of possibilities, and thirdly as development. In terms of contrast, Brown interpreted the connection between the two Wölfflinian categories in the sense of "a form of negative capability, [which] has no other principle of identity than that of identity with the opposite"¹⁸⁸, Foster described this relation as "diacritical"¹⁸⁹. Similarly, Holly described the two visual regimes as "contrasting optical modalities: linear versus painterly perception, planar versus recessional spatial articulation, clear versus unclear compositional strategies...".¹⁹⁰ But in Wölfflin's text, the terms of the five pairs are connected by the word 'and' and not with the term 'versus'.¹⁹¹ While Wölfflin had situated the architectural effects

¹⁸⁸ Brown (1982), p. 386.

¹⁸⁹ Foster (2003), p. 88.

¹⁹⁰ Holly (1994), p. 347. My emphasis.

¹⁹¹ Cf. content page of the text and summary of the pairs in the introduction, *Grundbegriffe*, p. 25ff, *Principles*, p. 14ff.

of the Baroque against, in direct opposition, and therefore dependent on the Renaissance in the 1888 text, here, in the 1915 text, I want to argue that he is also developing an additional sense in the differentiation of the two modes. The categorical identity of the *Grundbegriffe* in the form of the two visual orders follows a bivalent logic.¹⁹² The juxtaposition presents contrasts because Wölfflin attempted, as he wrote, "to compare type with type, ... to let the differences ... speak as contrasts against each other".¹⁹³ The typologies as provisional and abstracted unities were used within an explanatory strategy to demonstrate a dichotomy, a general break and discontinuity in the historical continuum. Wölfflin described the modes as languages, as two different languages¹⁹⁴, acting as equal schemas. In this sense, the *Grundbegriffe* have been related to Weber's 'ideal types': as concepts that are not identical with empirical reality, but allow it to be ordered for thought.¹⁹⁵ Within early 20th century sociology, the nature of the two modes can also be connected to Windelband's philosophy of value, as "transcendental and autonomous norms"¹⁹⁶, these norms are 'valid (*gelten*)' but not 'real (*wirklich*)', and also to Rickert's 'structures of signification' which

¹⁹² But, of course, because Wölfflin identified the categorical dichotomy with the Classical and the Baroque, that is, with two historically located and chronologically successive styles, the diacritical, bivalent and ideal-typical nature of the opposition is in conflict with the historical dimension which establishes a logical sense of order and dependence. For Wölfflin this problem was not relevant: he unconsciously accepted and fostered the multiple functions and identities of his *Grundbegriffe*.

¹⁹³ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 25, *Principles*, p. 14. "Unsere Absicht geht darauf, Typus mit Typus zu vergleichen ... die Verschiedenheiten ... als Kontraste gegeneinander sprechen zu lassen". Cf. also: *Grundbegriffe*, p. 261, *Principles*, p. 226: "Dieser Wechsel der Anschauungsform im Kontrast des klassischen und des barocken Typus ist hier beschrieben worden. This change of the form of beholding in the contrast between classic and baroque types has here been described." My emphasis.

¹⁹⁴ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 22; 263, *Principles*, p. 12; 228.

¹⁹⁵ Hart (1995), p. 85. Eckl (1996), p. 202.

¹⁹⁶ Barash (1988), p. 45. Windelband reserved 'nomothetic', law-like explanations for the natural sciences, while he ascribed 'ideographic' or individually descriptive explanations for the historical sciences.

are not real, neither physically nor psychologically, but are the expression of groups of 'non-real' values which attach themselves (*sich behaften*) to particular empirical elements and make possible their coherence as a related set of individual unities in a given culture. ... cultural values, far from being explained in their real embodiment by such extraneous factors, themselves provide an autonomous basis of coherence through which alone the structures of signification may be understood.¹⁹⁷

Rickert's terminology and elucidation were conceived within sociology. But in terms of the concepts, they point to a sort of meta-discourse. The objects illustrate and exemplify the concepts, they form a system of principles which mirror and reflect Wölfflin's conceptual terms. In this typological conception of difference, the dichotomy of Wölfflin's modes has been criticised as a simplification of issues by Hauser.¹⁹⁸ But the interest of Wölfflin's typology, I would argue against Hauser, is not to pronounce essences according to which one can then assign various objects, but rather to understand that any object manifests distinctions within itself when compared to certain other objects which the typology can help to establish and analyse.

While the modes are different, they also have a 'connective deep structure', Eckl called this their *systematische Zusammengehörigkeit* (systematic unity, identity).¹⁹⁹ Wiesing noted that Wölfflin himself did not comment on the relation and connection of the two modes of the five pairs, and that it was mainly

¹⁹⁷ Barash (1988), p. 50f.

¹⁹⁸ Hauser (1958), p. 157. Hauser's criticism of simplification misses the point; Wölfflin wanted to generalise and universalise the distinction of the two modes in order to compare two equal totalities. Wölfflin directly stated that he did not aim to analyse the art of the investigated periods per se, a dimension which he considered to be much more lively and diverse than his theoretical oppositioning of the two visual schemata. Cf. *Grundbegriffe*, p. 261, *Principles*, p. 226. Hauser furthermore criticised the *Grundbegriffe* as "not systematic, merely historical" (p. 156), a criticism which should have been thoroughly disproved by my previous interpretation of the two modes. The fundamental terms are both conceptual and historically particular at the same time.

¹⁹⁹ Eckl (1996), p. 235.

scholarship on Wölfflin that explored this aspect.²⁰⁰ In terms of connectivity and relation, the two modes formulate a system of categorical differences which refer to the same underlying field of the experience of space and visual spatiality (in perception and depiction) by the subject. The two modes are related because Wölfflin employed them to register relative positions and identities, depending on the compared objects. Wölfflin wrote: "it is throughout a question of relative judgements. ... Grünewald is certainly more painterly than Dürer, but beside Rembrandt he all the more bears the stamp of the Cinquecentist", by manifesting more linear characteristics.²⁰¹ Therefore, the two categories constitute not only opposites but also indicate a second function: two different possible limits within whose scope works can be situated in relation to each other. The connection and the differences of the modes function as a spectrum. In the conception of the spectrum, the chronological aspect of objects is partly suspended. The polarity delineates the possibilities for the visual engagement of the subject, outlining a field of relations. Wölfflin characterised the modes as "optical possibilities"²⁰² and as "possibilities of depiction"²⁰³ in the text. The comparison of two works allows and conditions the identification with one and the other visual possibility, depending on the objects compared. In the conclusion of the text, Wölfflin noted that he did not want to analyse the art of the 16th and 17th centuries, "that is something richer and more living, only the schema, the *possibilities* of vision and arrangement, within which the art objects

²⁰⁰ Wiesing (1997), p. 102.

²⁰¹ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 44, *Principles*, p. 30.

²⁰² *Grundbegriffe*, p. 22, *Principles*, p. 11.

²⁰³ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 23, *Principles*, p. 12.

remained and had to remain".²⁰⁴ In the 1920 article, 'In eigener Sache', where Wölfflin took up aspects and criticisms of the 1915 text, he re-emphasised that he attempted to "describe the forms of beholding (*Anschauungsformen*) as general possibilities".²⁰⁵ Passarge perceived and interpreted the two modes as "last basic possibilities of pure formal arrangement".²⁰⁶ In the 1920 article, Wölfflin stressed that such a classification, meaning the structure and the division into two related possibilities, does not cover actual history, but acts as a construction, a spectrum which registers different directions.²⁰⁷ The judgements and identities are relative, Wölfflin noted.²⁰⁸ Hohl interpreted the polarity aspect of the notion of possibilities as "optical barriers" within which the artists of an epoch conceived their work and necessarily so.²⁰⁹ Holz similarly saw the modes as "the most general possibilities", as "limits or prototypes".²¹⁰ Following these interpretations in the 1960s, Eckl more recently described Wölfflin's categories as a "condition for the possibilities ... which differentiate systematically the different dimensions of the aesthetic synthesis of space", as "ideal terms of limit (*Grenzbegriffe*)" which delineate this "*Möglichkeitsbereich* (area

²⁰⁴ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 261, *Principles*, p. 226. "Nicht die Kunst des 16. Und 17. Jahrhunderts wollten wir analysieren, diese ist etwas viel Reicherer und Lebensvolleres, nur das Schema, die Seh- und Gestaltungsmöglichkeiten, innerhalb deren die Kunst da und dort sich gehalten hat und halten musste". My emphasis.

²⁰⁵ Wölfflin (1920), p. 16 [as printed in *Gedanken zur Kunstgeschichte*, 1941]. "Ich habe in meinem Buch versucht, die Anschauungsformen der neueren Zeit nach ihren allgemeinsten Möglichkeiten zu umschreiben". My emphasis.

²⁰⁶ Passarge (1932), p. 169. "... sie bezeichnen letzte Grundmöglichkeiten rein formaler Gestaltung". My emphasis.

²⁰⁷ Wölfflin (1920), p. 16 [as printed in *Gedanken zur Kunstgeschichte*, 1941] "Eine solche Charakteristik kann sich -ich wiederhole es- mit der tatsächlichen Geschichte nicht decken, es ist eine blosse Hilfskonstruktion, ein Massstab, an den man Richtungen festlegen kann".

²⁰⁸ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 44: "Es handelt sich immer um relative Urteile", *Principles*, p. 30.

²⁰⁹ Hohl (1961). "... wo optische Schranken erkennbar werden, innerhalb derer die Künstler einer Epoche ihr ideales Werk zu sehen und sich vorzustellen gezwungen sind".

²¹⁰ Holz (1965). "allgemeinsten Möglichkeiten", "Grenzwerte oder Prototypen".

of possibilities)".²¹¹ Wiesing also defined the two modes as the spectrum within which individual works can oscillate.²¹² Wölfflin had attempted to demarcate the available *Anschauungsformen* (forms of beholding and conception) as "apriori perceivable *Eckdaten* (edge data)".²¹³ Wiesing compared this function of the *Grundbegriffe* to the regulation mechanism of computer programs and their relational-logical connection²¹⁴, through which the aesthetic characteristics of objects are identified in terms of diverging degrees and nuances.²¹⁵ The two modes "demarcate opposing ends of a scale of possibilities. They are 'limit concepts', marking two extremes between which all depiction must take place", as Gaiger formulated it.²¹⁶ Since stability is easier to describe than change, Wölfflin emphasised the identity of the modes as stable points or ideal types within which material can be categorised.

With the system of the spectrum and the possibilities of the *Grundbegriffe*, the position of the two categories in relation to the historical reality of artists and works must be problematised. Hermann Bencken had already commented on this aspect in 1944. He saw the category of the possibilities as located "prior to the reality" of the examples in terms of the analytical methodology, thereby stressing the theoretical connection of the modes, as

²¹¹ Eckl (1996), p. 201; 241.

²¹² Wiesing (1997), p. 131.

²¹³ Wiesing (1997), p. 131. "*a priori erkennbare Eckdaten*".

²¹⁴ Wiesing referred to computer programs (p. 106f) in which the user can choose between a spectrum of possibilities, such as the regulation mechanism of darker or lighter, sharper or more diffused, etc. in image manipulation programs. Wiesing also referred to contrast regulators (*Kontrastregler*) of the television set (p.106). In terms of the relational-logical connection, darker or lighter, for instance, both play with values of light in the image.

²¹⁵ Wiesing (1997), p. 105.

²¹⁶ Gaiger (2002), p. 33.

opposed to the real historical correspondence.²¹⁷ Bencken argued for the lack of any determination of and within the possibilities; the historical development and the human freedom to realise tendencies within the scope of the polarity was not restricted.²¹⁸ Fritz Strich in his monograph on Wölfflin highlighted the problem of this interpretation. As a former student of Wölfflin, he distinguished between Wölfflin's notion of the *Grundbegriffe* (as presented in texts and lectures) as functioning *underneath*, therefore called *Grundbegriffe* (sub- or basic concepts), and quasi prior to any individual expression, and his personal understanding of them as being a conceptual terminology *above* the artist and the object.²¹⁹ This differentiation is based on a completely divergent application of the function of the two modes. Strich saw them as categories with which to analyse and classify artworks and therefore belonging to a dimension above history, as an *apriori* of the exploration by a historian who is looking for categories with which to group works together retrospectively. Wölfflin, as Strich himself explained, wanted to define operative and *apriori* sub-terms in the sense of a medium through which he could characterise the common and diverse elements which formed and structured the perceptions of and the depictions by the artist and the observing subject, the underlying visual attitudes and experiences of space in works.²²⁰

²¹⁷ Bencken (1944). "Die Kategorie der Möglichkeit aber ist der Wirklichkeit vorgeordnet. ... überhaupt nicht realen, sondern ideellen Zusammenhänge der Möglichkeiten". My emphasis.

²¹⁸ Bencken (1944).

²¹⁹ Strich (1956), p. 32. "Er selbst hat immer erklärt, dass er sie deshalb *Grundbegriffe* genannt habe, weil sie nur die untersten, untergründigsten Schichten der Kunst und Kunstentwicklung bezeichnen sollen, die noch vor und unter allem individuellen Ausdruck liegen. Aber ich muss gestehen, dass ich sie vom ersten Augenblick an, da ich in Wölfflin's Bahn und Bann geriet, als oberste Begriffe verstanden habe, als höchste Werte". Strich's emphasis.

²²⁰ Strich's comment and distinction make clear how easily Wölfflin's notion can be interpreted and understood in the opposite way than Wölfflin intended and argued.

The visual possibilities manifested and pointed to the third function of the two modes, namely to the notion of change and development.²²¹ This identity mirrors the notion of the emergence of the Baroque from the Renaissance of the 1888 text. The *Grundbegriffe* describe the transition between optical possibilities, as Rothacker noted.²²² In the 1915 text, Wölfflin outlined his intention clearly to present terms with which historical transformations and development could be captured.²²³ In his introduction, he summarised the first four pairs with the formula "development from... to...".²²⁴ At the same time, however, Wölfflin stated that he believed in the possibility to discern a principle, a law in all change.²²⁵ It was not the development as such he wanted to trace, he wrote:

but to expose the individual differences which lead from the style of the 16th century to that of the 17th must be left to a detailed historical survey which will, to tell the truth, only do justice to its task when it has the determining concepts at its disposal.²²⁶

His differentiation and identification of the development, and the definition of the poles of this development, are the parameters for the categorical system of the two modes. In the conclusion of the text, Wölfflin mentioned "this change (*dieser Wechsel*)"²²⁷ as the "process of the transformation of the imagination (*Prozess des Vorstellungswandels*)"²²⁸, and his sections '3. The Why of the Development' and '4. Periodicity of the Development' deal directly

²²¹ Already explored to some extent in the analysis of the terminology of 'evolution and transformation' earlier in this chapter.

²²² Rothacker (1919), p. 170. "... ablaufende Wandlung der optischen Möglichkeiten".

²²³ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 5f., preface to 6th edition; p. 20, *Principles*, p. viif.; 9.

²²⁴ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 25f., *Principles*, p. 14f.

²²⁵ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 29, *Principles*, p. 17.

²²⁶ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 25, *Principles*, p. 14. "Die einzelnen Übergänge aber darzulegen, die vom Stil des 16. Jahrhunderts zum Stil des 17. führen, muss der speziellen Schilderung vorbehalten bleiben, die freilich ihrer Aufgabe auch erst gerecht werden kann, wenn sie die entscheidenden Begriffe in der Hand hat".

with the conception of the two modes as signifying development over time. The transitional aspect of the two modes depicts an evolving difference which connects conceptually, but also fundamentally problematises, the relation of continuity and discontinuity in history. The theme of change as active movement, as "*Wandlung*", of the *Grundbegriffe* was identified by Strich.²²⁹ The sense of 'development' as movement also implies the antithetical model of thesis – antithesis, with reference to Hegel's dialectics of historical change. Podro described Wölfflin's visual categories as an "accounting of the historical transformation of art ... [which predicates] a consequentiality in the development of art".²³⁰ For Podro this aspect of Wölfflin's text is a problem; he interpreted the developmental conception as a "way architecture [and art in general] transforms and re-presents the form of earlier architecture".²³¹ Podro read the two modes as positing an action followed by a reaction.²³² When interpreting Wölfflin's notion of change as movement, it is easy to see the transformation in terms of a Hegelian progress(ion), and thereby as necessary teleological evolution. But Wölfflin coupled his notions of change and development with a compartmentalisation, a separation of the two visual regimes as dichotomy, and with the spectrum scheme of possibilities. He registered the various modalities of the conceptual

²²⁷ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 261, *Principles*, p. 220.

²²⁸ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 262, *Principles*, p. 227.

²²⁹ Strich (1956), p. 25.

²³⁰ Podro (1982), p. 129.

²³¹ Podro (1982), p. 117.

²³² In relation to Wölfflin's 1888 text, *Renaissance and Baroque*, Podro is correct in interpreting the differentiation of the two style units as dependent logical relation: the Baroque is defined as binary opposition to the Renaissance. The Renaissance presents the primary field of operative effects towards which the subsequent Baroque effects can be opposed. In the 1915 text, the difference is arranged with several functions, as just explained, not only as oppositional difference, but also as constituting the scope of a spectrum and as developmental model.

discourse which reflects not only the historical dimension. In a speech, Wölfflin formulated this ambivalence of the connection of the transformativity with the polarity and contrast of the *Grundbegriffe* in much simpler terms: the process of change is reduced to the two modes.²³³ The multiple identity of these systems of the two modes negates the idea of only two opposing visual regimes and opens an interstitial area which allows "infinitely many forms".²³⁴ Wölfflin lifts the investigation of particular works to a more universal category of the subject (as conceptual terms of spatial aesthetics), and to a knowledge of the objective relatedness of these particulars in his categorical terms, the two modes.

By combining the three functions of the conceptual terms in the text, Wölfflin did create a problem in relation to the historical field: the paradox of linking terms of discontinuity and rupture with contrasting and polar possibilities, and with terms of a unified continuity, charting development and change. The divergent functions of the *Grundbegriffe* in terms of the two modes create real ambiguities in the work. This, without doubt, intensified misunderstandings of the text tremendously. Wölfflin conceived the *Grundbegriffe* as signifying the three functions all in one. The three functional criteria all constitute and predicate the two categorical modes congruently in the text. The three identities are conceptually integrated. Wölfflin combined factors of an evolving continuity and factors of a ruptured discontinuity in his text which is complex and problematic. While periodisation and the differentiation of segments of history are always a matter of interpretation, Wölfflin's inclusion of

²³³ Wölfflin (1911), p. 574.

²³⁴ Wiesing (1997), p. 106.

continuity and discontinuity within the *Grundbegriffe* shows his various and contradictory attitudes to the conception of history. The 1915 text manifests the intellectual confrontation of two different models of history. By embracing opposed theories of history (continuity and discontinuity), Wölfflin's 1915 text exemplifies a transition within historical thinking; he sits on the fence so-to-speak, between Historicism's embrace and Modernism's rejection of a relation with the past.

The ambiguity between and conflation of the historicity and the conceptuality of the *Grundbegriffe* is a major source for contradiction of the 1915 text, but it also manifests Wölfflin's significant struggle to express his ideas. Not only is the apriori register of spatiality of the subject in conflict with the categorical principle which classifies artworks of a certain period, the exact relation and connection of all the implied fields of operation, of epistemology, systemisation, methodology and history, are undefined and problematic.

A further problem of the 1915 text consists in the gap between the manifestation of the modes as outlined in the text and the presentation of research. In the text, Wölfflin presents the two modes as generalities which are substantiated with specific examples. But his research must have started with many particular works which led him to the formulation of the general distinctions, the two modes and the five pairs. The research implies induction. The text, on the other hand, insists upon deduction, starting with principles which are then connected to and exemplified in particular examples. Wölfflin's presentation of his research in the text is confusing because it appears as if he has taken his notions of the *Grundbegriffe*, as apriori

for historical implementation. It seems not really at all clear what he is comparing: conceptual notions or individual historical examples or two centuries/periods. One of the most difficult problems of the text is that, actually, Wölfflin is doing all these things. Paradoxically, he is speculatively exploring theoretical concepts by analysing, and thereby categorising, the historical field with those notions. The methodology of the comparison brings about an interweaving of various textual threads. Wölfflin's method of developing the *Grundbegriffe* in the comparison of visual modes and of historical works is realised in the presentation of two images.

two illustrations Wölfflin acknowledged the importance of illustrations for the 1915 text. In his lecture to the PEN Club (1944), when summarising his career and work, he mentioned that the *Principles* as publication could not have been understood without illustrative material.²³⁵ He remembered the pride that he and his publisher felt with regard to the 113 illustrations included in the first edition which was published during the first World War in 1915.²³⁶ The illustrations in the text are a powerful pedagogical tool with which Wölfflin portrayed his dualism of the modes of vision rhetorically for the subject to see, recognise and comprehend.

Wölfflin's text contains only black and white photographs. Black and white images highlight and intensify the tonal contrast in photographic reproductions. Features relating to the outlines of forms and space are emphasised in the grey-scale of photographs.

²³⁵ Information from printed version of the speech in the archival material.

²³⁶ As printed and published in *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, July 1945. Also mentioned by Dilly (1975), p. 170. Note that the 11th German edition of 1957 includes 123 images, the English edition from 1950 contains 150 illustrations, which is a considerable addition and extension of the illustrative material.

The nature of black and white photography rhetorically strengthens Wölfflin's hand. The increased contrast in the black and white images mirrors and fits into the rhetorical technique of the contrasting comparison of the *Grundbegriffe* which was examined earlier.

The presentation of two illustrations underlines their comparative character. Wölfflin's device of pairing images on opposite pages in the text is a version of his invention of showing two slides at the same time in his lectures. Nelson, however, cited Watkin who noted that in the middle of the 19th century, the English architectural historian C.R. Cockerell lectured in front of two large drawings, "or rather assemblages of sheets ... showing in comparative juxtaposition most of the famous structures of antiquity, the one in elevation, the other in section".²³⁷ While it is right to acknowledge Cockerell for showing his students and audience two images, he was not really comparing two different structures, but presenting the same building in various aspects. Wölfflin, on the other hand, is illustrating a comparison of two different works which may present similar motifs, poses or compositions, for example, female nudes by Botticelli and by Lorenzo di Credi or almost the same interior scenes by Terborch and by Metsu.²³⁸ The correspondence between the two images in motif, composition or content is immediately clear. Wölfflin does not need to comment on this. Because the examples Wölfflin has chosen are so similar in content and motif he is able to concentrate on the categorical and

²³⁷ Quoted by Nelson (2000), p. 424. Nelson refers to David Watkin: *The Life and Work of C.R. Cockerell*, London, 1974, p. 106f.

²³⁸ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 12/13; 14/15; 16/17. *Principles*, p. 2/3; 4/5; 7. These examples are from the introduction, but the same applies to the rest of the text.

historical differences. Summers summarised this aspect as "Wölfflin's familiar device of comparing treatments of the same theme from different periods".²³⁹ The similarity of the examples provides the basis to construct the systems of contrasts and differences as well as of the development and continuity across time.²⁴⁰ Wölfflin focuses on the modifications in the depiction of forms in space. The two illustrations present the co-ordination of the historical material and the reciprocal theoretical demarcation of the two modes of spatial organisation. The status of the images is relative, depending on what is compared, and relational, in that the significance lies in the web of connections the illustrations foster and produce as a pair²⁴¹.²⁴² The text is not about the artworks per se, nor about the periods they represent, but about the very position works can occupy within a dynamic system of relations and identities.²⁴³ The technique of comparison had been important to Wölfflin since his student days. In

²³⁹ Summers (1989), p. 374.

²⁴⁰ In this respect Wölfflin's utilisation of works from the same genre: nudes, portraits, landscapes, etc. is a vital aspect for later histories and genealogies of these particular traditions.

²⁴¹ Cf. *Grundbegriffe*, p. 44, *Principles*, p. 30f. "Grünwald is certainly more painterly than Dürer, but beside Rembrandt he all the same bears the stamp of the Cinquecentist, that is, the man of the silhouette."

²⁴² Recht (1995) saw the "power of the text" in the "particular analyses of works" (p. 44), while Andreas Hauser (1986) noted that the examinations of works gained the upper hand without, however, an apparent loss of sight of the more philosophical criteria of the exploration (p. 42).

²⁴³ In this regard, Gombrich (1985) in his essay 'Norm and Form' has made an important point: he acknowledges that two illustrations or slides are "a pedagogical device that has helped many teachers to explain to their students certain elementary differences, but unless it is used with care it subtly but decisively falsifies the relationship between the two works... [because] when we read the comparison the other way round and contrast Raphael with the Caravaggio we are on more dangerous ground. We imply that Raphael, too, deliberately rejected the methods of Caravaggio" (p. 90). Gombrich made the significant error to fail to distinguish between the conceptual, the categorical and the historical identity of the *Grundbegriffe*. Theoretically and categorically, the two modes of vision are contrasts and opposites which also display a certain developmental line. As soon as one involves the chronological and historical dimension, Caravaggio can not explain Raphael (for this an artist from the 15th century would be necessary). But because Wölfflin used the various identities of the *Grundbegriffe*, without making the differences absolutely clear, I can understand why Gombrich could cultivate this implication. However, Gombrich's cautioning pertains to teachers like him, and not Wölfflin's thinking, when they elucidate on the comparison of two images, and

1886, for instance, he scribbled "comparative art history" in a notebook.²⁴⁴ In an article of 1921, "*Das Erklären von Kunstwerken* (The Explanation of Works of Art)", he commented on the same issue: "the particular is seen by everybody, the difficulty lies in the connective seeing of the whole".²⁴⁵ The comparison of two illustrations made this connective understanding of art for Wölfflin not only possible, but visible and concrete. He demarcated history as *Wissenschaft* in terms of the recognition of relations and connections in an early notebook, emphasising that "one cannot talk about this, one has to see it, ... this connection (*Zusammenhang*) leads from the smallest [object, element, detail] to the most general".²⁴⁶ When images are analysed side by side, the similarities and, more importantly, the differentiations instigate a network of relations. The paired comparisons present individual works, but they also inherently refer to other objects related to them - works by the same artist or architect, or works with the same motifs (such as the female nude, landscapes, etc.) depicted by other artists. This implies an indirect reference to a large amount of material in the conceptual and historical comparison. Wölfflin constructs a system reaching beyond the relation between the particular network of references and the individual objects which he illustrated. This produced an indirect generalisation, a zooming out from the individual examples, thereby connecting the meaning of the individual objects to the categorical

attempt to make the historical comparison an exemplification of the categorical differentiation.

²⁴⁴ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 54.

²⁴⁵ Wölfflin: "*Das Erklären von Kunstwerken*" (1921) published in *Kleine Schriften*, ed. by J. Gantner (1946), pp. 165-177. ("*Das Einzelne sieht jeder, die Schwierigkeit liegt im Zusammensehen des Ganzen.*" P. 166). My emphasis.

²⁴⁶ Notebook 15 (1887/88), p. 21r. "*Die Historie als Wissenschaft ist eine Erkenntnis von Abhängigkeitsverhältnissen. ... hierüber kann man nicht reden, das muss man sehen, ... dieser Zusammenhang leitet vom Kleinsten über zum Allerallgemeinsten.*" My emphasis.

level of the two modes. The link between the illustrations and the dynamic historical structure is emphasised: two images can illustrate the general difference between the Renaissance and the Baroque modes of vision.²⁴⁷

McCorkel regarded the relationship between the method of comparison and the data, the visual reproduction of something fundamentally visual, as symbiotic.²⁴⁸ In this regard, the presentation of illustrations implies an active participation of the subject in the comparison. Wölfflin provided the text with visual material, the reader is also a viewer. The paired illustrations prompt the reader/viewer to engage visually in a dialogue about two different modes of visibility. The images produce the recognition and the validation of Wölfflin's theories for the viewer. In the text, the illustrations "progressively refer", Recht observed, "to the interpretation of the comparison, and to the supposed relation between the viewer and the work".²⁴⁹ The viewer encounters in the reproductions the visual experience of perception which Wölfflin theorised in the spatial regimes. The illustrations appear as both object and vehicle of the speculations about visibility. Images and text together produce the argument. Accordingly, Wölfflin set up this interpretation of the differences in the perception and depiction of space by a subject, not only as a conceptual speculation and an

²⁴⁷ It is this aspect of generality which is both implied in the comparisons of illustrations and referred to in the hypothetical concept of the styles as units and types (cf. preface to 6th ed., *Grundbegriffe*, p. 7, *Principles*, p. ix) which prompted critics to interpret Wölfflin's text as elucidation about the art and architecture of the 16th and 17th centuries, although Wölfflin made it clear in his conclusions to the text that his investigation in the contrast between the Renaissance and the Baroque style was not about the art of the 16th and 17th century, but about the visual schemata, the possibilities of vision and of depiction in the works and centuries compared (cf. *Grundbegriffe*, p. 261, *Principles*, p. 226).

²⁴⁸ McCorkel (1975), p. 47.

historical investigation but also as the exemplification of the personal experience of the vision and the visuality of the subject. The illustrations epitomised the conceptual situation of the *Grundbegriffe*, by realising the experience of visual perception and visuality.

The illustrations condition the language of the analysis. Wölfflin's descriptions of the images promote the experience, the *Erlebnis* of reproduced historical objects from the point of view of the subject. In relation to Wölfflin's dissertation, the *Prolegomena* from 1886, and to empathy theory, the illustrations provide a means to partake of the objects, to (re)experience (*nacherleben*, *nacherfahren*) objects from the past. The illustrations in the text are the causes and sites of the experience of the subject's perception. The possibility of immediate visual experience of the illustrations by the viewer/reader influences the comprehension of the theoretical speculations. The recognition of Wölfflin's dichotomy was validated through the viewer's own perception of two illustrations. The positioning of two illustrations on two opposing pages in the text made the dichotomy evident, and the formal differences more noticeable.²⁵⁰ Wölfflin constructed and orchestrated an argument which was at its very foundation visual, rather than verbal. All was directed towards the *Anschauung* (beholding, visualisation) and "the pure and legible visuality/visibility (*die reine, ablesbare Schaubarkeit*)" of the image.²⁵¹ Nelson showed that Wölfflin built the "visual arguments upon carefully observed particulars", because he included reproductions, specifically of details, in the form of

²⁴⁹ Recht (1995), p. 34.

²⁵⁰ Locher (2001), p. 384.

²⁵¹ Rehm (1960), p. 92.

photographs in the text and slides in lectures.²⁵² Wölfflin's illustrations construct the two modes; in this mechanism, "the image is not the expression of a code, it is the variation of a work of codification [cf. relative position and identity of two regimes]: it is not the repository of a system but *the generation of systems*".²⁵³ Wölfflin's comparison of two illustrations establishes its own theory, the differentiation of two modes of visibility. Recht characterised the particular use of comparative images by Wölfflin as the "symptomatic novelty of his thinking".²⁵⁴ Wölfflin's arguments in the 1915 text and his way of lecturing fundamentally depended on the visual material.

Illustrative material was used to characterise the artwork; "the art itself stood in the centre" as Riggenbach observed.²⁵⁵ Christoffel also commented on the fact that the "given [that is, the illustrated and visually presented] work of art was always the α and ω of [Wölfflin's] examination".²⁵⁶ But photographs and slides presented works removed from their locations and times, divorced from their condition and position in history. For Fawcett, reproductions "released art from its entanglement in history. Art regained its primacy. The image seemed to speak directly to the observer".²⁵⁷ The analysis of the reproductions emphasises the visual experience of the work and its formal characteristics. Summers commented that "this imaginary particularity [of the reproduction] informs our understanding of the work, that is, it changes our

²⁵² Nelson (2000), p. 432. Nelson also named Warburg in this regard.

²⁵³ Barthes (1991), p. 150. My emphasis.

²⁵⁴ Recht (1995), p. 35.

²⁵⁵ Riggenbach (1945/46), p. 3.

²⁵⁶ Christoffel (1934).

²⁵⁷ Fawcett (1983), p. 455.

judgement of it in the present".²⁵⁸ The medium of the reproduction fuelled the discussion of art. Wölfflin's approach to art history and the subject in the 1915 text reflects the pivotal importance of illustrations. The implication of the subject in the visual experience of the reproductions is made concrete. The illustrations have to be seen in order to follow Wölfflin's argument. In his seminal article on this matter, Dilly argued accordingly that: "judgements about art and artworks [as well as architecture] were dependent on their reproducibility", and "art [and architecture] which was not reproduced or not reproducible could not be included" in the thinking and the scholarship.²⁵⁹ Reproductions prompted "the experiential act of perception [to become] a primary source of art-historical knowledge [apart from] 'extra-artistic' philological and literary source materials", Adler observed.²⁶⁰ The inclusion of visual material in the form of photographic reproduction fundamentally changed and shaped the teaching and scholarly analysis of art. The experiential and evidentiary aspects of the photograph were so crucial at this moment in the discipline of art history, that André Malraux made his famous statement: "the history of art has been the history of that which can be photographed".²⁶¹ It could even be argued that the history of art no longer describes and deals with actual works but with the archives of photographic reproductions. Photographic reproductions shape the discourse of a work, divorced from the material reality of an object.²⁶²

²⁵⁸ Summers (1989), p. 404.

²⁵⁹ Dilly (1975), p. 164.

²⁶⁰ Adler (2004), p. 451.

²⁶¹ Malraux (1967), p. 111.

²⁶² The influence and the scholarship on Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona Pavilion, which only existed for the duration of the exhibition, would be a leading example in this line of thought. The photographs of the original structure have produced such

The photograph and the slide are images which manifest the reproduction of a painting, a sculpture or a building; as such, Barthes stated that "the picture is neither a real object nor an imaginary object".²⁶³ Photographs are a different entity or specie than the object; they belong to the discourse of photography. However, for the visual experience of the viewer the objects *appear as if* they were visually "present in the discursive space" of the reproduction.²⁶⁴ In this regard, Nelson noted that "ironically the photographic slide's very power to make art present in the lecture hall distorts it at the same time because, to state the obvious, the original is not present".²⁶⁵ The reproduction, I would argue, has a different presence than the original object; it is essentially a visual simulation, a projection, and a virtual presence. Illustrations in a text function as a condition which enables a particular, albeit distanced, but nevertheless, visual encounter, *Erlebnis*, of the object. The immediate materiality of the work has been left behind; the illustrations demonstrate the visual idea, the visibility of the objects. Although the objects are not physically present, only reproduced in images, the subject can experience the illustrated objects visually. As Crary has shown, not only was the status of the observing subject transformed in the 19th century, but also the status of the object, with the "industrialisation of image making", i.e. photography, and the "serial modes of image reproduction, which permitted both the

an enormous amount of discourse and status that the building was reconstructed for the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona, and can now be experienced once more in material form. The building has come back from the photographic archives into built reality.

²⁶³ Barthes (1991), p. 150.

²⁶⁴ Nelson (2000), p. 432.

²⁶⁵ Nelson (2000), p. 432.

global circulation and juxtaposition of highly credible copies of disparate artworks".²⁶⁶ Because the physical, the material, the bodily status of the object is reduced, the visual dimension has gained centrality. "Reproductions are intrinsically replacements"²⁶⁷, photographs and slides have not only dematerialised the object but also placed visibility in the centre of the art-historical discourse. As Dilly stated, "the newly created collections of slides prompted different criteria of classification, apart from chronological identifications of names of artists".²⁶⁸ The experience of the reproduction shaped the focus of the analysis, in Wölfflin's case towards the exploration of visibility itself. In this sense, photography, in terms of "modernisation[,] effected a deterritorialisation [of the object] and a revaluation of [the] vision" of the subject.²⁶⁹

Looking at photographs entails two diverse but related fields: with reference to Kant, the reproductions trigger, on the one hand, the aesthetic experience of the subject. On the other hand, and in regard to Hegel, illustrations permit the art-historical experience of the historian which facilitates the categorisation of the historical material. Wölfflin's theory of vision and visibility incorporates both dimensions without, however, referring to this distinction which is significant. Wölfflin seems to have inherently grasped the importance of photographic reproductions but his ideas remain muddled and not clearly defined. In this regard, "the slide, although

²⁶⁶ Crary (1992), p. 13, 21.

²⁶⁷ Vinograd (1994), p. 593.

²⁶⁸ Dilly (1979), p. 168. And interestingly, most slide libraries are part of the art historical department, and not the general library of a University. In the departments of art history, these collections perform a gallery function.

²⁶⁹ Crary (1992), p. 149.

a photograph, creates not the 'perception of having been there'²⁷⁰ - Roland Barthes's notion of the ontology of a photograph- but a reality that *is there*'.²⁷¹ The reproduced work creates the impression of a purely *visual* reality for the subject referring to the visual dimension itself, rather than the physical and material dimension of the experience of the subject.²⁷² In the reproduction, the artwork which is absent is made present as visual discourse. The two illustrations in the 1915 text, and the two slides in Wölfflin's lectures, portray and create this visual experience of the subject. The experience of the perception of the depicted spatial aesthetics within the parameters of the reproduced work is the realisation of Wölfflin's argument in the text. Images lend Wölfflin's text and his lectures an immediate quality. The works appear in front of the viewer, they have become visible, albeit in a reproduced, printed or projected form. With the help of the illustrations, Wölfflin provided a certain sense of empirical reality to his theoretical explorations and historical analysis. The epistemological speculations about visual and spatial perception are indeed substantiated for the subject to experience.²⁷³ What the viewer receives, Arnheim summarised, "is the visual image of surface shapes, which acquire their dynamic

²⁷⁰ Implying an experience of physical contact in terms of vision, not necessarily touch, of the bodily subject and the corporeal object.

²⁷¹ Nelson (2000), p. 418. Nelson's emphasis. Not that the 'having been there' implies a bodily presence, while the visual reality of the 'is there' exemplifies Wölfflin's idea of the mode of vision.

²⁷² This emphasis on the *visuality* of the experience of the illustrations is precisely an echo and a demarcation of Wölfflin's notion of the visual dimension of spatiality according to which the subject is structuring perceptions of works of art and architecture. The earlier conception of the physicality and spatiality of bodiliness has culminated in the mechanism and function of vision. The subject is visually (rather than with the entire body) perceiving the spatial formation and composition of objects in the illustrations.

²⁷³ Landsberger (1924) informs us that Wölfflin stood in the darkened lecture hall at the back of the audience, speaking freely, without any notes, about the illustrated slides (p. 93). This implies that Wölfflin's elucidation of the images appears as mere commentary, almost as personal thoughts. The remarks demonstrate his personal

character as the image is processed by the observer's nervous system"; and "the dynamics of perceptual experience is the fundamental component of visual images".²⁷⁴ Visuality is contained but, at the same time, is an extension of bodiliness.

Franz Landsberger, a former student of Wölfflin, described Wölfflin's slide lecture presentation technique as extremely powerful.

Wölfflin, the master of extemporaneous speaking, places himself in the dark and together with his students at their side. His eyes, like theirs, are directed at the picture. He thus unites all concerned and becomes the ideal beholder, his words distilling the experiences common to everyone.²⁷⁵ ... Wölfflin's speech never gives the impression of being prepared, something completed that is projected onto the art work. Rather it seems to be produced on the spot by the picture itself.²⁷⁶ The art work thus retains its pre-eminent status throughout. His words do not overwhelm the art but embellish it like pearls.²⁷⁷

Waetzoldt characterised the atmosphere in Wölfflin's lecture hall as akin to the atelier of the artist: listening to Wölfflin's lecture and looking at the slides, one had the impression of witnessing the creation of a work of art.²⁷⁸ Wölfflin was standing behind the audience when he lectured, connecting and integrating the projected object, the audience's observations, and his interpretation, so that "word and image fused in the performance"²⁷⁹. Similarly, the 1915 text attempts to stimulate a visual experience which collapses the distinction between the observing and reading subject and the reproduction. The significance of the experience is based on the visual valence of the

perception and response to the works; his theory of visual perception is exemplified, verbalised and made concrete.

²⁷⁴ Arnheim (1977), p. 212; 213.

²⁷⁵ It might be argued, following this description of Wölfflin's lecturing technique, that Wölfflin and the audience have become a single body looking at the projected slides. The audience might automatically identify with Wölfflin's bodily descriptions because in the darkened room, they all feel as one.

²⁷⁶ Wölfflin's explanations of the reproduced images appear to be an expression of his immediate perception and spontaneous response to the works shown.

²⁷⁷ Landsberger (1924), p. 93f.

²⁷⁸ Waetzoldt (1924), p. 241.

image, which is perceived by the subject. The illustrations offer and entice qualities of a personal and empirical observation.

"Anton Springer, a prominent German professor of art history of the 1880s, referred to photographs as the discipline's microscope and a means for giving it a scientific foundation".²⁸⁰ Photographs as documentation and as empirical evidence highlight art history's aspirations and the role of reproductions in attaining them. In relation to the previous technology of printed drawings or engravings as illustrative material, "photography is introduced because it can make copies that do not interpret", Freitag noted.²⁸¹ But only by the reference to printed drawings and engravings which were always already themselves artistic depictions of a work, could the impact of photography be understood in its new status for the methodology and the *Wissenschaftlichkeit* of the discipline of art history. Reproductions were now considered as 'visual facts' which brought "art history closer to other more positivistic, inductive disciplines of the 19th century".²⁸² Fawcett observed that "as soon as a lecturer began to refer to illustrations he assumed the role of demonstrator"²⁸³, indicating what Schwarzer called "the fiction of the art historian as the scientific assembler of objective facts"²⁸⁴. The use of photographs and slides revolutionised the teaching and the scholarship of art history. Wölfflin figures prominently among the early historians and theorists who realised the possibilities of using photographic reproductions in lectures and texts.

²⁷⁹ Nelson (2000), p. 423.

²⁸⁰ Nelson (2000), p. 431.

²⁸¹ Freitag (1979/80), p. 118.

²⁸² Nelson (2000), p. 433.

²⁸³ Fawcett (1983), p. 457.

²⁸⁴ Schwarzer (1995b), p. 28.

Because of the illustrations, the text could produce a visual engagement of the subject with the reproduced work. It is not an experience of the object as such, but the experience of an image of the object. In the case of paintings, the illustration shares a certain two-dimensionality with the original object. But with regard to sculpture and architecture, the visual impact of reproductions on the subject is utterly different from the direct experience of the objects. Wölfflin commented directly on this problem in his 1893 article on Roman triumphal arches. He contrasted the "impressions ... [one got from] a geometric elevation on paper" with the experience of a triumphal arch "in reality".²⁸⁵ And although illustrations were quintessential for Wölfflin's argument, even Wölfflin had concerns about the mimetic valence of the photographs, and their 'objectivity'. To quote Nelson in this respect again, "photography supported a new objectivity because it was understood ... to be mechanically produced, *without* human intervention and interpretation, and thus objective".²⁸⁶ Wölfflin, on the other hand, did have doubts about the impartiality and objectivity of reproductions. In the preface to Die Kunst Albrecht Dürers, 1905, Wölfflin stated that

due to the popularisation of art history, the feeling [and appreciation] for the original [work] has alarmingly decreased. It is good [and necessary] to bring attention from time to time to the fact that one single original print by Dürer can be infinitely more important to the knowledge and comprehension of his art than the entire series in distorted reproductions, copies (*verfälschten Nachbildungen*).²⁸⁷

In the preface to the fifth edition of the 1905 text, Wölfflin referred to "wrong, incorrect effects when engravings were reduced in size

²⁸⁵ Wölfflin (1893), p. 68 (in Kleine Schriften, 1946).

²⁸⁶ Nelson (2000), p. 432. My emphasis.

(*falsche Wirkung der Verkleinerung*)".²⁸⁸ Wölfflin's concern for the inadequacy of reproductions was mostly directed at photographs of sculpture. He wrote several articles on this topic.²⁸⁹ He mostly criticised the photographs for their exclusive capture of the frontality of the sculptures which produced too restricted, even wrong interpretative statements about the objects. Wölfflin presented and discussed the divergent effects of the same sculptures photographed from different angles, which exemplified certain misrepresentation of the originals.²⁹⁰ Wölfflin did not want to have better photographs instead of bad ones, but, more precisely, what he considered, "correct ones instead of incorrect ones".²⁹¹ For Wölfflin, it was a question of lighting²⁹² and how the sculptures were intended to be seen, for instance, with regard to their original positioning in particular locations ("*Ensemblewirkung*").²⁹³ In a letter to Burckhardt from Rome (23. May 1897), where Wölfflin was working on his book *Die klassische Kunst*, he noted:

From day to day I become more convinced that it is absolutely futile to try to understand monumental art on the basis of what we can learn from photographs. I have to strike out more and more of the notes I made in Basel. But, of course, nobody will in the least appreciate my struggle and what I am trying to do because today people want to have only the photographs explained.²⁹⁴

²⁸⁷ Wölfflin, *Die Kunst Albrecht Dürers*, Munich, 2000, 10th edition, p. 8.

²⁸⁸ Wölfflin (1905), p. 9. Cf. The List of Illustrations in the text provides information about the measurements of the works in millimetres, most likely to give the reader/viewer an idea about the size of the original.

²⁸⁹ Wölfflin: "*Wie man Skulpturen aufnehmen soll* (How To Perceive Sculptures)" (1896, 1897, 1914); "*Über Abbildungen und Deutungen* (On Reproductions and Interpretations)" (1941).

²⁹⁰ His examples were two statues of the Virgin with Child one from Breslau and the other from Berlin, photographed from various view points. They showed different structures of the formal composition of the fold pattern. "*Über Abbildungen und Deutungen*" (1941), pp. 68/69, pp. 70/71.

²⁹¹ Wölfflin: "*Über Abbildungen und Deutungen*" (1941), p. 66: "*Nicht die bessere Aufnahmen soll an die Stelle der schlechteren treten, sondern die richtige an die Stelle der falschen und irreführenden*".

²⁹² Wölfflin "*Über Abbildungen und Deutungen*" (1941), p. 69.

²⁹³ Wölfflin: "*Über Abbildungen und Deutungen*" (1941), p. 72.

²⁹⁴ Gantner (ed.) (1989), p. 165. "*Dass man über monumentale Kunst nicht nach Photographien urteilen kann, merke ich täglich deutlicher, je mehr ich alles das wieder austreichen muss, was ich in Basel ausgeheckt habe. Es ist das eine Arbeit,*

Burckhardt himself was clearly aware that engravings as well as photographs of a work meant "the interposition of an active human intelligence between the object and its viewer".²⁹⁵ Photographs present a "more or less accidental detail or extract (*zufälliger Ausschnitt*) of the reality"²⁹⁶ of the object, and in this respect they are chosen and fabricated by a subject, the photographer. Photographic reproductions are a problematic medium to visualise works of art for Wölfflin, implying what Fries called the "fragwürdige 'Welt' der Diapositive, Bibliotheken und Photographien (the questionable world of slides, libraries and photographs)"²⁹⁷. In the 1915 text, Wölfflin lamented the use of "mere photographs", and that small illustrations can only manifest details to some degree.²⁹⁸ Wölfflin was aware of the problems of the presentation of photographs, and more specifically, of slides. In response to slides having been put in the slide-projector sometimes the wrong way round by accident, Wölfflin wrote an article "*Über das Rechts und Links im Bilde* (On the Right and Left in the Image)" (1928), in which he discussed the different effects of the formal compositions, when the image showed a reversal of the original work.²⁹⁹ He was conscious of distortions and misinterpretations of the object when

die mir niemand danken wird, denn die Leute wollen ja eigentlich doch nur Photographien erklärt haben". My emphasis. English translation from Freitag (1979/1980), p. 120.

²⁹⁵ Freitag (1979/1980), p. 122.

²⁹⁶ Dilly (1975), p. 168f.

²⁹⁷ Fries (1934).

²⁹⁸ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 56; 58, *Principles*, p. 41; 44.

²⁹⁹ In the article, Wölfflin showed illustrations of Raffael's 'Sistine Madonna', a landscape with three trees by Rembrand, and 'Reading Woman' by Janssens; all examples were presented in the correct and the reversed (left to right reversal) form. Interestingly, in the publication of this article (initially written for the Festschrift for Peter Wolter's 70th birthday) in Wölfflin's *Gedanken zur Kunstgeschichte* (1941), the two illustrations were presented on two opposing pages, i.e. with maximum impact of the divergent effects of the reversal.

depicted by photographs and slides, in terms of different points of view, changes of scale, and the independent characteristics of the medium of reproduction. Precisely because perception was defined by the participation of the subject, illustrations are always already a phase apart from the aesthetic experience of the work itself. Wölfflin thematised these 'false' interpretative illustrations to distinguish between the experience of the original work (in situ) and the experience of reproductions. Nevertheless, in a text or a lecture about the aesthetic experience of art, illustrations do present some sort of visual engagement. The differences and implications were later extended and further problematised in Walter Benjamin's impressive study of 1935/36: Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner Technischen Reproduzierbarkeit, The Work of Art in the Age of its Technical Reproducibility.

To conclude this section, it should be noted that Wölfflin's illustrations in the 1915 text have a crucial role to play in the argumentation which presents two regimes of spatial aesthetics in two illustrations respectively. In terms of the historical analysis, the images work as a manifestation of the object and as a documentation of *wissenschaftlicher* evidence and support for the theory of the two visual regimes. In the text, two illustrations are compared and contrasted, materialising their conceptual identity and showing *visually* the categorical dichotomy of the *Grundbegriffe*. Rhetorically, the two images present the differences and contrasts as if they were pure opposites which suppress the theoretical problems of the categorical juxtaposition. The comparison of two illustrations produces the polemical points of difference, spectrum, development and succession all at the same

time which is problematic. The flood of images becomes a form of persuasion. The reproductions illustrate the theoretical argument and speculations, and visualise it in concrete terms for the reader. Dilly argued correctly that the use of reproductions of works and the projection of slides in lectures were essential vehicles of and for Wölfflin's theories.³⁰⁰ The illustrations play a rhetorical role in unifying the multiple functions and identities of the *Grundbegriffe* in the discursive apparatus. The compared images constitute and manifest the conceptual, the categorical and the historical differences between the two modes. In this respect, I am arguing that it was precisely the introduction of photographic reproductions of works into the art historical scholarship, and with this the dual identity of the objects and their illustrations, which prompted Wölfflin's extension of the notion of bodiliness to the discussion and the theory of visuality in the *Principles*. The reproductions problematised but, more significantly, captured the visual status of the object. Illustrations removed the subject from the physical and material experience of the object, while, at the same time, manifesting the visual reality of it. The perception of the reproduction is exemplifying and emphasising the vision and visuality of subject and object. Wölfflin was aware of the conflicts of photographic reproductions; however, he did not present the problems of illustrations as his primary concern in the 1915 text. In the text, the images are a medium for Wölfflin's argument, but, I argue, they are at the same time also the underlying trigger for it. The illustrations provide a rhetorical vehicle for the recognition of the subject's visual experience of the different visual modes of

³⁰⁰ Dilly (1975), p. 167.

spatial organisation. The reproductions predicate an engagement with and an exhibition of Wölfflin's speculative epistemological notions of the visibility of beholding and reception of art and architecture. The experience of the illustrations intertwined and, thereby, complicated Wölfflin's concern for the epistemology of the subject and for the structured systemisation of comparisons.

In this analysis of selected themes and implications of Wölfflin's *Principles*, it has become apparent that the multiple functions of the *Grundbegriffe* (conceptual or epistemological, categorical and historical) reflect affinities and interrelations between different fields. The oscillation between the theoretical and the historical spheres or intentions produced ambiguities and contradictions. Wölfflin's ideas evolved out of the consideration for the subject's involvement in the interpretation and understanding of the object. But whereas subject and object were constituted and linked by bodilyness in the earlier texts, the proliferation of photographic reproductions of objects reduced the physical and material hold on the subject, and prompted the theory of visibility and the dichotomy of the modes of vision. Wölfflin's approach to art history in terms of the aesthetics of the subject remains predicated by perception and reception.

In the following part two of this chapter, the themes and their implications will be connected to the intellectual discourses and the historical context with particular regard to the operative fields of the text, that is, art history and architectural theory, methodology in terms of a *wissenschaftliche* systemisation, and the philosophical domain.

visual worldviews

In this last section of the chapter, the most relevant discourses and contexts are traced. The 1915 text is related to the fields of art history and architectural theory, to the notion of a systematic *Wissenschaft*, the attitudes towards history in the more general intellectual domain, as well as to the philosophical references to Kant, Schopenhauer and Dilthey. These areas contain the layers of relevance with which the connection of theory and history is implemented in various fields, namely as epistemology, as methodology, as systematisation and as history-writing.

In the 1915 text, Wölfflin produced many ideas. He had connected the particular with the general: individual works with two divergent modes of spatial vision. The text appears, therefore, to be a study of two historical periods (or styles) and the development from one to the other, while it is rather the exploration of conceptual patterns of visibility, together and interlaced with the method of analytical comparison in terms of art history. Wölfflin had also presented an argument as to the role of the subject in the creation, experience and understanding of the object, whether as artist or as viewer, or indeed as historian.

This plurality of the issues involved in the text can be inferred from the many versions of titles and, thereby of content and emphasis, of the text which Wölfflin recorded in his notebooks from

1902 until the publication in 1915, as listed by Warnke.¹ For Warnke, the variations of titles "suggest an unsettling uncertainty and disorientation" of Wölfflin.² Eckl noted Wölfflin's apparent "unconcernedness (*Unbekümmertheit*)" and lack of clarification of the terminology presented in the 1915 text, in using diverse terms interchangeably.³ This accumulation of terms, themes and consequently problems was considered by Gantner to be a summary of all the issues and topics Wölfflin had researched in the past:

the psychological studies in his youth [*Prolegomena*, 1886], the opposition of the Renaissance and the Baroque [*Renaissance and Baroque*, 1888], the engagement with antique ["*Die antiken Triumphbögen in Italien*", 1893], Italian [*Classic Art*, 1899], and German classicism [*Die Kunst Albrecht Dürers*, 1905], the remembering of the theories of Fielder and Hildebrand, and the experience he gained through teaching a whole generation.⁴

In response to Gantner, I would argue that the 1915 text is more than a summary of the topics Wölfflin was concerned with. The *Principles* display not only a variety of issues but, more importantly, exemplify how these various fields are connected, how they are fundamentally

¹ Warnke (1989), p. 174; (1995), p. 100f. 1902: 'Der Stil. Einführung in die neuere Kunstgeschichte' (Style: Introduction to Recent Art History). 1903: 'Die Begriffe der Kunstgeschichte' (The Concepts of Art History). 1904: 'Prinzipien der Kunstgeschichte' (Principles of Art History). [Warnke also mentioned the 1905 publication of Schmarsow's *Grundbegriffe der Kunst*] 1909: 'Entwicklungsgesetze der neueren Kunst' (Developmental Laws of Recent Art); 'Übungen in vergleichender Kunstbetrachtung' (Exercises in the Comparative Considerations of Art); 'Kunsthistorische Analysen' (Art-Historical Analyses). 1910: 'Der Stil in der bildenden Kunst' (Style in the Visual Art); 'Formale Analysen zur Einführung in die künstlerische Entwicklung der neueren Zeit' (Formal Analyses as an Introduction to the Artistic Development of Recent Times). 1912: 'Die Entwicklungsform der neueren Kunst' (The Form of Development in Recent Art). 1913: 'Das Problem der Entwicklung in der bildenden Kunst. Eine Erörterung der Grundbegriffe des Stils in der neueren Kunstgeschichte' (The Problem of Development in the Visual Arts: A Consideration of the Fundamental Principles of Style in Recent Art History). 1914: 'Die Grundbegriffe der Kunst. Kunst als Ausdruck. Kunst als Darstellung. Kunst als Qualität' (The Fundamental Principles of Art: Art as Expression, Art as Depiction [translated by Warnke as Representation], Art as Quality). 1915: 'Grundbegriffe der neueren Kunstgeschichte (Kunstentwicklung)' (Fundamental Principles of Recent Art History: Developments in Art); and the final title: Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Das Problem der Stilentwicklung in der neueren Kunst. (Fundamental Art-Historical Principles [in the English edition translated as: *Principles of Art History*]: *The Problem of the Development of Style in Recent Art*).

² Warnke (1989), p. 174.

³ Eckl (1996), p. 21.

⁴ Gantner (1966), p. 14.

interlocked and integrated.⁵ In short, it was not Wölfflin's intention to combine various different themes and issues, but, rather, this was the general condition of the emergent discipline of art history.

Wölfflin emphasised the concept of artistic production and depiction within the question of the perception and reception of empirical and spatial visualisation (*Anschauung*). He presented a speculative idealistic theory of epistemology about aesthetic experience, *Erlebnis*, echoing his doctoral dissertation, in which the subject (artist and viewer) has a visual bodily perception (*Wahrnehmung, Anschauung* and *Vorstellung*) of an object. At the same time, Wölfflin explored a transcendental-philosophical theory of art, focusing on the analysis of the visual conditions of the spatial organisation of forms. Such a theory implies an embodied subject, and, thus an account of the aesthetic experience of the subject. The demarcation and identification of *Grundbegriffe*, however, was only possible with empirically and historically situated forms and objects, although Wölfflin stated in the 1915 text that "our object is only to draw the distinction between concepts"⁶. Nevertheless, Wölfflin included historical dimensions in his *Grundbegriffe*, with his examples and illustrations, but also by stating that "not everything is possible at all times"⁷. This means the two different formations of visualisation do not co-exist all the time according to Wölfflin, but are inherently attached to the prevalent visual worldviews of a particular

⁵ The discourses of the theory and methodology of art history with regard to *wissenschaftliche* aspirations of the discipline, themes within architectural theory, and philosophical elements of the intellectual discourse.

⁶ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 62, *Principles*, p. 45. "da wir ja nur Begriffe deutlich machen wollen".

⁷ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 7 (6th ed. preface), 22, *Principles*, p. ix, 11. "Es ist nicht alles zu allen Zeiten möglich". Note the preface to the 6th edition was written in 1922 and repeats the phrase from the text, surely to emphasise the historical dimension of the fundamental concepts.

historical moment. The object is always already an historically situated object. This object constitutes an aesthetic experience for a subject who in turn is always already positioned in history. In his 1944 lecture to the Pen club, he had hinted at the *difficulty* of coordinating the dichotomous theoretical concepts and the artistic productions, what he called, "the richness of real art history".⁸ Wölfflin's comparisons of works and illustrations do not merely *exemplify* abstract and theoretical concepts therefore, but activate the categorical (two modes) and historical (five pairs) *Grundbegriffe* in the first place. Wölfflin's two typological visual regimes as categorical terms (Classical – Baroque) are dependent on specific historical forms (from the timeframe of the 16th and 17th centuries) and on the visual experience of these individual works.⁹ The categorical division also predicates a developmental logic between the Classical and the Baroque. In the directionality from the Classical to the Baroque, the development is a necessary one, exhibiting, what Wölfflin called, an "efficient psychological process (*rationell psychologisch*)"¹⁰. This complicated amalgamation of history and theory in the 1915 text presents the Baroque confusingly as "at once the opposite of the classic and [related to it, as] later and simultaneous, cancellation and fulfilment", as Brown has observed.¹¹

⁸ Jedlicka (1965), p. 43: "Die Schwierigkeit ist nur, zu erklären, wie sich das Abrollen und der gesetzliche Ablauf dieser Sehformen verbinden lassen mit der Mannigfaltigkeit und dem Reichtum der realen Kunstgeschichte und künstlerischer Produktionen". My emphasis.

⁹ Hauser (1958), p. 152.

¹⁰ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 28, *Principles*, p. 17, incorrectly translated as 'rational'.

¹¹ Brown (1982), p. 396.

"Wölfflin's procedure", Brown argued, "is both objectively analytical and subjectively interpretive"¹², which makes the text ambivalent. Looking at the many misunderstandings of the 1915 text, it seems that it is a melange of too many fields and divergent issues. One might think Wölfflin failed to make the relations between the different dimensions of the text clear. The disentanglement and separation of the diverse dimension of the text is difficult precisely because Wölfflin did not think of them as different aspects. He could not have explained these connections, for they were inherent in the art-historical discourse. This shows that the distinction between history and theory, as we think of it today, did not exist for Wölfflin. The exploration of visuality and visual worldviews included necessarily both theoretical and historical analysis. And, as in Renaissance and Baroque, Wölfflin's contemporary surroundings shaped the 1915 text.

This raises the question of Wölfflin's relation to the art of his own period and its effect on his arguments. In this respect, Hauser mentioned that Impressionism and the theory of 'l'art pour l'art' were essential to Wölfflin's conception of art history.¹³ The vision and the perception of artists, what they see in a single moment, what they see in their imagination (*Vorstellungsformen*), how the aesthetic experience, impressions and feelings of the artists shape the depicted object, were of course a major concern of Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Fauvism, Expressionism, and Cubism. These avant-garde movements could be considered as a contemporary influence for Wölfflin's art historical approach, as Warnke has also

¹² Brown (1982), p. 392.

¹³ Hauser (1958), p. 244.

noted.¹⁴ Warnke based his statement directly on Wölfflin who wrote in 1914 that "art history and art evolve in parallel".¹⁵ Wölfflin projected contemporary artistic themes –the organisation of form¹⁶, the visual experience¹⁷, the imagination of the subject- into the past, to analyse the Renaissance and the Baroque. He referred several times in the 1915 text to Impressionism as a reincarnation of the Baroque.¹⁸ Christoffel commented on the atmosphere of artistic and intellectual change in the early 20th century¹⁹; and that with the emergence of Cubism and Expressionism, the whole question of *Stilwandel*, changes in style, became a renewed problem.²⁰ More specifically, Christoffel explained that the presentation of the development from the Renaissance to the Baroque "reproduced a process in conceptual terms" which was experienced in the 19th century in architecture, in Impressionism, and "particularly massively in Richard Wagner".²¹ Christoffel also noted that the style crisis of the 19th century was observed and replicated in historical terms by Wölfflin in the very idea of the development from the Renaissance to the Baroque. It was identified also in the transition of late antiquity to

¹⁴ Warnke (1995), p. 106. Gantner mentioned Croce who realised the connection between Wölfflin's analytical thinking and the artistic movements since Impressionism. Gantner (1966), p. 18.

¹⁵ Warnke (1989), p. 178; (1995), p. 106. Wölfflin's statement was made in the article "Die Architektur der deutschen Renaissance", in: *Gedanken zur Kunstgeschichte*, p. 118.

¹⁶ While contemporary art movements, such as Cubism and Expressionism explored the abstraction, dissolution and fragmentation of form, Wölfflin analysed how forms are spatially organised and visually structured. These are two different aspects, of course, but the consideration of form permeates both directions.

¹⁷ Impressionists investigated and attempted to depict the visual experience of (atmospheric) light and movement in their paintings; Wölfflin focused on the visual experience of the subject in more epistemological terms, with his ideas about visuality and spatiality.

¹⁸ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 34; 66, *Principles*, p. 21; 51.

¹⁹ Cf. 1905 foundation of 'Brücke' movement; 1910 Kandinsky writes "Über das Geistige in der Kunst" and paints his first abstract paintings, as does Paul Klee; 1912 'der Blaue Reiter', 1919 establishment of the Bauhaus.

²⁰ Christoffel (1946), p. 38.

²¹ Christoffel (1946), p. 38. My emphasis.

the early Middle Ages by Wickhoff, Riegl and Schmarsow.²² Dittmann characterised the task of the *Kunstgeschichtswissenschaft* (Wissenschaft of art history) of Wölfflin's time to transcend the muddle of contemporary artistic movements. The plurality of contemporary styles and movements became a condition for the *Kunstgeschichtswissenschaft* to emerge.²³ Crary commented that "how one periodises and where one locates ruptures or denies them are all political choices that determine the construction of the present".²⁴ In this sense, historical studies of the past are explored, mostly unconsciously, by the present to understand and work through the present. Summers defined art history in a similar vein, as "an ongoing discussion about works of art by people who continually indicate and try to explain to others what they see either in works of art or series of them and what is significant about what they see".²⁵ This is, of course, shaped by the prevalent interests of the historian's or scholar's own time.

Wölfflin's approach to art history can be seen as a reaction against the conventional connoisseurship of identifying artists (attribution) and writing about individual artists and their lives (biography) -what Burckhardt called the "cheese of the history of artists (*Käs der Künstlergeschichte*)"²⁶-, and the research into the thematic content and iconographic motifs of art. Wölfflin's concern for the subject and the general sphere of art and history stands in contrast to the increasing specialisation of research. His ideas were clearly a reaction to the traditionalists of the discipline. Wölfflin

²² Christoffel (1946), p. 38.

²³ Dittmann (1967), p. 81.

²⁴ Crary (1992), p. 7.

²⁵ Summers (1989), p. 395.

²⁶ Wölfflin, *Gedanken zur Kunstgeschichte*, p. 151.

made it clear in the 1920 article "*In eigener Sache*" that he did not want to replace the "old" art history, but that his texts were intended to be "merely an attempt to look at the subject [=the field] from a different perspective".²⁷ Warnke wrote that "his [i.e. Wölfflin's] predecessor in Berlin, Hermann Grimm, was of course a virtuoso at presenting a cultural-historical panorama that was put at the disposal of the great Individuals".²⁸ In contrast, Wölfflin's own practice, summarised as *Kunstgeschichte ohne Namen*, art history without names, focused on art as form. Kuntz explained that, for Wölfflin, intellectual or cultural content was not the most significant aspect (*das Entscheidende*) of art; form was the real characteristic (*das Eigentliche*) of art for Wölfflin.²⁹ In the 1915 text, Wölfflin had mentioned a variety of notions of form, "*Vorstellungsformen* (forms of the visual imagination)", "*Sehformen* (forms of vision)" and "*Formmöglichkeiten* (possibilities of form translated as formal possibilities)"³⁰, "*Formauffassung* (conception of form)", "*Formpsychologie* (psychologist of form, translated as psychologist of style)"³¹, "*Formempfindung* (feeling of form, translated as sense of form)"³², and "*Darstellungsformen* (forms of depiction, translated as representational forms)"³³. In the analysis of an art work, one can ask 'what is depicted?', exploring the content of the work; and one can ask 'how is it depicted?', examining the form of the work. Wölfflin was aware of these two dimensions, already commenting on the issue in 1883, at the beginning of his University studies: "What

²⁷ Wölfflin (1920), p. 16 (reprint of article in *Gedanken zur Kunstgeschichte*, 1941).

²⁸ Warnke (1989), p. 176.

²⁹ Kuntz (1964).

³⁰ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 5, *Principles*, p. vii.

³¹ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 13, *Principles*, p. 3.

³² *Grundbegriffe*, p. 16, *Principles*, p. 6.

³³ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 24, *Principles*, p. 13.

thoughts did the artist have and how did he get them? How did he express these thoughts?".³⁴ Of course these two aspects are connected. Gaiger observed that form for Wölfflin was "the very medium through which different expressive contents are first realised"³⁵, referring to the 1933 Revision. In the Revision, Wölfflin limited the independent identity of form, formerly³⁶ conceived merely as the container (*Schale*) of expressions of content; content was always already part and parcel of the perception and depiction of forms.³⁷ Nevertheless, Wölfflin examined form without references to content, focusing on form as an exclusively visual register. Accordingly, Warnke noted that in the 1915 text "form is, for the first time, explicitly presented as a carrier of unbound, aesthetic, individual qualities".³⁸ Within Wölfflin's "idealist matrix, 'form' thus took on a vastly important [role and] modern connotation; it became the essence of art, supplanting imitation", as Summers observed, "once and for all".³⁹ The history of form was 'the other' to the iconographical and *geistesgeschichtliche* approach to art history, and both left behind the biographical approach. Together they were the two leading art historical theories of the discipline in German discourse before the First World War.⁴⁰ For historians concerned with the content of art in cultural and intellectual terms, however, Wölfflin's ideas of visual and spatial form were naturally unsatisfactory. While "Wölfflin was content, on the whole, to

³⁴ Notebook 7 (1883), p. 27.

³⁵ Gaiger (2002), p. 26.

³⁶ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 263, *Principles*, p. 227.

³⁷ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 276. A translation of the Revision is not included in the English edition.

³⁸ Warnke (1989), p. 179.

³⁹ Summers (1989), p. 374.

⁴⁰ Bauer, Hermann (1981), p. 180.

concentrate on the formal analysis of style and to leave the problem of its content to others".⁴¹

Wölfflin's analysis of the change from the Renaissance to the Baroque had also been a response to Burckhardt's presentation of the Renaissance as an historical and intellectual totality. Burckhardt's research was interpreted by some as a nostalgic reaction to the political and cultural turbulence of the 19th century.⁴² Meier interpreted Wölfflin's own attempt to structure the change from the Renaissance to the Baroque also as a response to the plurality of styles in art and architecture throughout the 19th century, because for Wölfflin, "not everything is possible at all times"^{43,44} Wölfflin's patterns of change involve both continuity and discontinuity. With regard to this issue, Hauser suggested two possible views of history's relation to historical scholarship: firstly, history is seen as continuous and the *wissenschaftliche* textualisation and scholarship of it can only be a manifestation of discontinuous descriptions of particular events taken out of the continuing chronology; or, secondly, history is believed to be contingent, discontinuous and directionless, and only historical portrayals, analyses and interpretations can construct a continuous and sensible order out of the chaos of historical events.⁴⁵ In Wölfflin's 1915 text, both views can be found.⁴⁶ He abstracted and generalised his categorical *Grundbegriffe* from the plurality and difference of all

⁴¹ Steadman (1990), p. 106.

⁴² Ferguson (1948), p. 180f.

⁴³ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 22, *Principles*, p. 11.

⁴⁴ Meier (1990), p. 73.

⁴⁵ Hauser (1958), p. 170.

⁴⁶ The identities of the five pairs are specific to the chosen periods and evidenced by multiple actual artworks, while, at the same time, they prescribe a dichotomy which can be generalised in the form of the two modes (the Classical and the Baroque) and paralleled to other similar distinct conditions, such as antiquity and the Gothic period.

works of a limited timeframe in order to present some sort of coherent, homogeneous and structured order and ideal types. Wölfflin's basic principles could be related to Simmel's *Vereinheitlichungsbegriff*, the conception of unification, in which the category for the classification of material lies beyond or above the material reality in terms of an idea.⁴⁷ For Simmel, these apriori categories join isolated material into a line of development.⁴⁸ The 1915 text also captures works as discontinuous in terms of the experience and production of the artist, every work encapsulates the rendition of a certain visuality in time. In this sense, Wölfflin's exploration of the Renaissance and the Baroque is based on a theory of confluent styles⁴⁹, continuous and discontinuous, overlapping and interacting in historical as well as in conceptual terms, which mirrors the stylistic plurality of 19th century. Because the categorical and the historical dimensions of the *Grundbegriffe* are intertwined implying continuity and discontinuity, a stable sense of style is impossible. The characteristics of the styles "can be fixed wherever the problem at hand [for Wölfflin the spatial structures of forms] requires, since they admittedly have no objective [only an interpretative] reality".⁵⁰ This could well be a description of the simultaneity and multiplicity of architectural styles in the 19th century. In this respect, Belting noted that the "project of early art history" is related to the "project of Modernity", in the problematisation of the relation between history and style.⁵¹

⁴⁷ Simmel (1923), p. 60; 61.

⁴⁸ Simmel (1923), p. 70.

⁴⁹ Ackerman (1962), p. 236.

⁵⁰ Ackerman (1962), p. 236.

⁵¹ Belting (1994), p. 39 (of 2001 ed.).

The 1915 text figures prominently in this discourse of art history as establishing links between works and style in the sense of a dynamic historical formation. McCorkel gave an example: "art history is not satisfied with a value-involved assessment of what the Egerton Genesis *is*, it is necessary to understand its place in a dynamic structure"⁵², which entails the comparison to other works from the same time and across time. Wölfflin illustrated a similar point when writing in a notebook in 1886: "one should *not* go from one painting to the next [i.e. seeing them as individual works], *but* seize and apprehend the fullness of pictorial expressions of a time".⁵³ A few months later, he made a note to himself, to "never loose the bigger picture out of sight".⁵⁴ These remarks relate to his ideas about the "theory of art historical writing (*Kunstgeschichtsschreibung*)"⁵⁵. Wölfflin's approach to art history pertains not so much to the accumulation and research of new material, but rather to the presentation of an order and a classification system⁵⁶ with the help of categorical and historical terms.⁵⁷ An abstracted view of the developmental history of art was thereby created. In comparing works from different times and locations, Wölfflin "gives the concept of style a new base", Gerstenberg noted.⁵⁸

Of course, Wölfflin's theory of art history is fundamentally comparative. It is never about the identity of an individual work, but

⁵² McCorkel (1975), p. 47.

⁵³ Notebook 12 (1886), p. 15. "Nur muss man nicht von eine Gemälde zum andren gehen, sondern die Fülle bildlicher Äusserungen einer Zeit ins Auge fassen". My emphasis.

⁵⁴ Notebook 14 (1886-1887), p. 19. "Nie den grossen Zusammenhang aus dem Auge verlieren".

⁵⁵ Notebook 22 (March – Oct. 1889), p. 85r.

⁵⁶ cf. article of 1934 for Wölfflin's 70th birthday (*Kölnische Zeitung*): the (unnamed, only initials [OB]) author comments that Wölfflin's 1915 text "arrived at new results regarding the course of artistic epochs (*kam er zu neuen Ergebnissen über den Ablauf der Kunstepochen*)".

⁵⁷ Waetzoldt (1924), p. 242.

always about the relational aspects of similarity and difference. The conception of difference in the pairings of, for instance, "Romanesque and Gothic, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, Renaissance and Baroque, Neoclassicism and Romanticism", as Hauser stated, "belong to the categorical apparatus of art history, not to the artworks themselves".⁵⁹ The comparative analysis of works produces groups of art objects as lineages, genealogies and systems. It is an exploration of the nature of art, of art as a whole, in the sense of a *Bildkultur*, the culture of images.⁶⁰ This is a multi-dimensional and pluralist definition of art where typologies act as provisional unities to function within an explanatory strategy for locating and demonstrating difference and general breaks or discontinuity. Belting called this the "*Realfiktion*, the real fiction of art history".⁶¹ Wölfflin's *Grundbegriffe* are such fictional categories which were based and developed from the reality of historical examples. Works have been sorted according to constructed terms into an aesthetic system of visual worldviews.

Within the field of aesthetics, Wölfflin's discourse belongs to the transition from the context of beauty, the beautiful, and the ideal (e.g. Winckelmann) to the concepts of *das Künstlerische*, *Sichtbarkeit* (visuality, Fiedler), *Kunstwollen* (Riegl), and Wölfflin's own abstraction of historical development into systematic *Grundbegriffe*.⁶²

Wölfflin's theory of *Sehformen* (forms of vision) and *Vorstellungsformen* (forms of the visual imagination) relates to the

⁵⁸ Gerstenberg (1944), p. 96.

⁵⁹ Hauser (1958), p. 178.

⁶⁰ Weiss (1996), p. 79.

⁶¹ Belting (1994), p. 125 (of 2001 ed.).

⁶² Bauer, Hermann (1976), p. 25.

conception of artistic production and the aesthetics of the artist (*Künstlerästhetik*) which promoted an immediacy (*Unmittelbarkeit*) of artworks.⁶³ Wölfflin's approach can therefore be called a return to the object itself. But in comparing works, Wölfflin, on the other hand, conceived his analysis of objects as an investigation into the nature of art (*das Wesen der Kunst*). This *Wesensforschung*, research into the nature of art promotes this aesthetics of visibility as aspects of immanence and transcendence.⁶⁴ For Wiesing, it is precisely this double identity of the *Grundbegriffe* in terms of particular works ("*die Werke im besonderen*") and for the art in general ("*die Kunst im allgemeinen*") which conditions the epistemological function of the two visual regimes.⁶⁵ The epistemological dimension establishes the autonomy and the relevance of visual experience, as transindividual perceptual modes of the subject, in formal and spatial terms. With relation to the 1915 text, Wiesing argued that the "art [object] *shows or manifests*, and formal aesthetics [i.e. the conceptual terms] *think* the possibilities which are at the disposal of a work [or rather of an artist] to depict an object".⁶⁶ The epistemological concern was only indirectly articulated in Wölfflin's terminology of the 1915 text. Nevertheless, this aspect of aesthetics was one reason, according to Warnke, why the text was poorly received after its publication in 1915.⁶⁷ He wrote "the *Principles* were published at a historical moment when those who populated the scholarly cathedrals were none too sympathetic to subtle aesthetic, conceptual thought".⁶⁸

⁶³ Hüttinger (1967), p. 108.

⁶⁴ Heussi (1932), p. 90.

⁶⁵ Wiesing (1997), p. 108.

⁶⁶ Wiesing (1997), p. 108. Wiesing's emphasis.

⁶⁷ Warnke (1989), p. 173; (1995), p. 98.

⁶⁸ Warnke (1989), p. 173.

Aesthetics was only one among several pedagogical concerns of the text for Wölfflin.

In a notebook Wölfflin wrote in 1888 about his philosophy of teaching that students "should not learn a series of facts, a sum of names and dates, but they should get an understanding of what art is".⁶⁹ Art history consists of theories of art and, for Wölfflin, art is an aesthetic experience by the subject. In the article "*Über kunsthistorische Verbildung* (On Art Historical Miseducation)", Wölfflin argued that "knowing who painted a work does not mean necessarily understanding it".⁷⁰ In order for students to get a feeling for a style as a whole, he suggested in this article from 1909, to present "*Grundbegriffe* of artistic production in individual works".⁷¹ Accordingly, in the 1915 text, this pedagogy of the experience of art in general is manifested with regard to the method of comparison and illustrations of individual works. Another discourse is based on the spatiality of the subject with which the single art object and art in general are experienced and conceptualised into a system of *Grundbegriffe*, namely the architectural domain.

The 1915 text is situated within the architectural discourse of theories of space and spatiality. The issue of space takes up motifs from the previously discussed texts, the *Prolegomena* and *Renaissance and Baroque*. Wölfflin wrote in a notebook in 1885/86: "the spatial visualisation is connected to all our imagination. Form is a

⁶⁹ Notebook 18 (Winter 1888), p. 49. "Sie sollen nicht eine Reihe von Tatsachen, eine Summe von Namen und Zahlen lernen, sondern sollen Verständnis für das bekommen, was Kunst ist".

⁷⁰ Wölfflin (1909), p. 161 (printed in *Gedanken zur Kunstgeschichte*, 1941).

⁷¹ Wölfflin (1909), p. 164 (printed in *Gedanken zur Kunstgeschichte*, 1941).

relation between objects in space".⁷² This remark suggests that form, as bodiliness and visuality, connects subject and object. In the 1886 doctoral dissertation and the 1888 text, Wölfflin emphasised the fundamental role of the subject as spatial embodiment, which in turn characterised the architectural object in bodily terms. In the 1915 text, Wölfflin centred his exploration on the depiction of space in paintings and sculpture, as well as in architecture. The subject as viewer has a visual experience of spatiality in all three visual arts and the works illustrated and examined.⁷³ Eckl epitomised this in noting that the structure and the "constitution of space (*Raumbildung, Raumgestaltung oder Raumkonstitution*") in the subject's visual imagination and understanding are prompted by perception and by aesthetic experience.⁷⁴ The subject performs a visual reading of the spatially depicted object because the subject's own corporeal spatiality informs the process of perception and mental visualisation. The distinction between painted space and the three-dimensional space of sculpture and architecture is not relevant here since all understanding and categorisation of space is fundamentally related and interconnected to the impression of spatial effects in the observing subject. The visual reception of works informs the comprehension and understanding of them. In this sense, the *Grundbegriffe* of the 1915 text promote an 'aesthetics of reception', as did the *Prolegomena* and *Renaissance and Baroque*. From an architectural standpoint, the definition of architectural space as based on the subject's aesthetic experience, was quite different

⁷² Notebook 12 (1885/86), p. 11. "Die räumliche Anschauung haftet allem unsrem Vorstellen an. Form bedeutet eine Bezieh[un]g zw[ischen] Dingen im Raum".

⁷³ One has to keep in mind that the works Wölfflin examined all presented some sort of naturalistic spatial depiction of objects, figures, landscapes, buildings or interiors.

⁷⁴ Eckl (1996), p. 208.

from traditional or contemporary theories of architecture, which usually focused on materiality or technology.

The aspect, of space as experience of the subject, in the 1915 text was analysed by Schumacher in a 1918 article. Schumacher emphasised the identity of space in the subject's experience (of material architecture or architectural photography) as the *grouping* of buildings as opposed to space as mass or volume.⁷⁵ The diverse structures of space in the arrangement of several buildings as street or plaza formation had urban connotations and implications for Schumacher, which he did unfortunately not specify.⁷⁶ Schumacher related his understanding of the *Grundbegriffe* to urbanism, which no other scholar (to my knowledge) has done. Schumacher interpreted Wölfflin's five pairs as circling around the "relation of art to spatial impressions".⁷⁷ For Schumacher, Wölfflin's analysis beginning with painting, followed by sculpture, and architecture, in its exploration of spatiality should have been constituted the other way around: beginning with architecture, for which space is a fundamental element, then sculpture, and finally the treatment of virtual or depicted spatiality in paintings.⁷⁸ Schumacher's idea of presenting the architectural discussion of spatiality first, would have emphasised the bodiliness of form and of visuality. Indeed, the 1915 text involves the architectural discourse of space as constitutive of the aesthetic engagement of the subject with art, sculptural or architectural objects.

⁷⁵ Schumacher (1918), p. 399. My emphasis.

⁷⁶ Schumacher (1918), p. 398.

⁷⁷ Schumacher (1918), p. 402.

⁷⁸ Schumacher (1918), p. 402.

In order to trace the intellectual context of the 1915 text, the discourse of *Wissenschaft* has to be explored. *Wissenschaft* was the pivotal theme of the time: "following a shift in scientific consciousness toward a more empirical style of research, inductive and historical methods of understanding", Barash observed, "became a synonym for rigorous scientific thought in the humanistic disciplines".⁷⁹ The discipline of art history was evolving into a professional practice through, what art historians considered *wissenschaftliche* methodologies. Art history was generally related to the emergence of the 'historical sciences' which had to "replace a descriptive method by a genetic one which tries to formulate general laws of development".⁸⁰ Order and systematisation were the goals of all *Wissenschaft*. The problem of order demanded concepts, *Begriffe*, according to which the order could be established.⁸¹ McCorkel emphasised this specifically "Germanic preoccupation [of the professional discipline] with discovering a historical order [and] the wish to classify".⁸² Podro noted that Wölfflin was (among others, he also mentioned Riegl) "explicitly concerned with the construction of critical systems".⁸³ The discipline of art history, in Wölfflin's text, was an attempt to produce legitimate, independent ideas and methods particular to its academic field, with Wölfflin's focus on the visual and spatial aspects of forms. The involvement of the subject served as a means whereby the discipline's autonomy could be asserted as a way of understanding the object in the visual arts. Wölfflin formulated this *wissenschaftliche* goal in a notebook right at the

⁷⁹ Barash (1988), p. 78.

⁸⁰ Iggers (1968), p. 197.

⁸¹ Bauer, Hermann (1976), p. 11.

⁸² McCorkel (1975), p. 45. This aspect of German art historical scholarship can be distinguished, for instance, from the British preoccupation with connoisseurship.

beginning of his career: "make art history into a *Wissenschaft*".⁸⁴ In the 1920 article "*In eigener Sache*", he again commented on his intention to find directions for historical scholarship in order to come to "secure judgements".⁸⁵ Interestingly enough, Eckl remarked on the significant lack of bibliographical references in the 1915 text, to prior, parallel or competing examinations.⁸⁶

Wölfflin's "rational method" combined a "philosophical neo-idealism" that was looking for *Begriffe*, concepts ("*Begriffsbildung*"), with the empirical psychology of the senses ("*empiristische Sinnespsychologie*").⁸⁷ In terms of empirical foundations, the 1915 text attempts to enact aesthetic and spatial perception in presenting illustrations of works.⁸⁸ For Wölfflin, the empirical immediacy of beholding and visualisation (*unmittelbare Anschauung*) of works produced the identity of the *Sehformen* (forms of vision) as *wissenschaftliche Grundbegriffe*.⁸⁹ Underlying this *Wissenschaft* was the presupposition that "a stable set of ... criteria [would] enable objective systematisation of human phenomena across the boundaries imposed by vast changes in cultural values".⁹⁰ For Wölfflin, this led to a search for a general sphere of history, beyond individual artworks or artists. Wölfflin noted that "specialised research was blooming but what was missing was a general

⁸³ Podro (1982), p. 152.

⁸⁴ Notebook 26 (Oct. 1890 – June 1891), p. 17r. "*Aus der Kunstgeschichte eine Wissenschaft machen*".

⁸⁵ Wölfflin (1920), p. 16 (printed in *Gedanken zur Kunstgeschichte*, 1941). "*um für die Geschichtsschreibung Richtlinien zu finden, die eine gewisse Sicherheit des Urteils verbürgen*". My emphasis.

⁸⁶ Eckl (1996), p. 141.

⁸⁷ Hermand (1965), p. 12.

⁸⁸ The visual aspect of works can be experienced visually and personally by the subject.

⁸⁹ Hermand (1965), p. 12.

⁹⁰ Barash (1988), p. 78.

summary [and] the formulation of *Grundbegriffe*".⁹¹ With the ideal-typical constructions of the conceptual terms, Barash observed that the

historical study was directed toward an infinite arena from which empirical material could be inductively gathered and typologically classified ... the type brought together heterogeneous samples of material and constructed out of them a general pattern.⁹²

In the preface to the 6th edition of the 1915 text, Wölfflin stressed that he intended to capture the common aspects in view, or in opposition, as well as in connection to all the individual differences of works.⁹³ The relationship between the analysis of objects and the presentation of concepts highlights the conflicts in the operation of the text. With emphasis on the multiple identities of the *Grundbegriffe* (as theoretical or epistemological, categorical and historical registers), Wölfflin produced a conceptual history, what Dittmann called "*begriffene Geschichte*"⁹⁴. This label implies the understanding, *verstehen* and *begreifen*, of history; while the German phrasing also hints at history in conceptual terms, as *Begriffe*.⁹⁵

Wölfflin had a capacity to synthesise historical material into conceptual terms, to trace patterns, and to invent a framework of

⁹¹ Notebook 47 (Spring 1907 – March 1912), p. 50. "*Die spezialistische Forschung steht in Blüte, was fehlt sind die Zusammenfassung, die Ausbildung der Grundbegriffe*".

⁹² Barash (1988), p. 74.

⁹³ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 7: "*Und eben dieses Gemeinsame bei grösster individueller Verschiedenheit soll hier begrifflich erfasst werden*". *Principles*, p. x, translated as: "It is just this community co-existing with the greatest individual differences which this book sets out to reduce to abstract principles". My emphasis. Note that the English text is presenting a negative interpretation instead of a direct translation of Wölfflin's words, when the goal of the book is described as 'reduction to abstract principles'. The original phrasing of 'begrifflich fassen' rather connotes the attempts to gather and grasp commonalities, despite great individual differences, in terms of a conceptual constitution and co-ordination.

⁹⁴ Dittmann (1967), p. 219.

⁹⁵ As opposed to history as facts, dates, and names. The specific term implying concepts, *Begriffe*, would be '*begrifflich*' and not '*begriffen*', nevertheless, there is a certain linguistic affinity present.

classification. In the *Principles*, particular artworks are not individual examples but find their place in a comparison, in a series or as a development. They realise the general idea of *Gesetzhaftigkeit*, *Gesetzlichkeit*, and *Gesetzmässigkeit*, lawfulness, of the *Grundbegriffe* with empirical evidence. Landsberger characterised the *wissenschaftliche* function of this *Gesetzlichkeit* as focusing on the "unifying aspect within change (*das Einheitliche im Wechsel*)" and on the observation of "relationships despite differences (*Verwandtschaft trotz aller Unterschiede*)".⁹⁶ Fischer compared Wölfflin to a natural scientist (*Naturforscher*) who discovers in the manifold works the lawfulness of form.⁹⁷ *Gesetzlichkeit*, lawfulness, meant a "search for universal validity (*Allgemeingültigkeit*), ... the systematisation of values objectified in the past, ... [and] the objective coherence linking together the course of world history".⁹⁸ *Kunstwissenschaft* (the *Wissenschaft* of art), in this regard, circumscribes the field where artistic depictions are understood as a necessity of a style. This means the artworks, in their formal discourse, follow a law, comprising a certain autonomy and immanence (cf. *Kunstwollen*). This theory of *Kunstwissenschaft*, however, needs to be distinguished from the field of *Kunstgeschichtswissenschaft* (the *Wissenschaft* of art history) which aimed at the knowledge of laws (*Gesetzeserkenntnis*) with regard to a *historical conception* of art, rather than of the art per se. Wölfflin's model of history as periodicity and as sequences of optic regimes of visualised form (Classical → Baroque) was based on the presupposition of this *grundbegriffliche* and theoretical dimension of art history as

⁹⁶ Landsberger (1924), p. 54; 55.

⁹⁷ Fischer (1945), p. 2f.

Kunstgeschichtswissenschaft. Dittmann noted that "*Kunstgeschichtswissenschaft* recognises the law of development (*das Entwicklungsgesetz*) as such".⁹⁹ In the 1915 text, the notion of *Gesetzlichkeit* (lawfulness) informs Wölfflin's theory of art historical writing and thinking, the conception of how to structure material, not the lawfulness of the artworks as, for instance, Fiedler or Riegl believed. Hauser missed this conceptual level of Wölfflin's text, and therefore misinterpreted the development of art (*Kunstentwicklung*) as following an "inviolable and inner law", which he attributed to Wölfflin.¹⁰⁰ In the early 1920s, Wölfflin wrote in his notebook: "[I have] written the *Principles*, not to mechanise history, but to render the judgements exact".¹⁰¹ This reference shows that Wölfflin situated the *wissenschaftliche Gesetzlichkeit* of the 1915 text in the methodological conception of art history. The development from Classical to Baroque visual regimes is of conceptual necessity and categorical lawfulness. The manifestation of this conceptual lawfulness was, however, confusingly presented through individual, historically situated works, which made it appear as if the works themselves developed within a necessary line and formation. Dittmann identified Wölfflin's *Grundbegriffe* as *kunstgeschichtstheoretische* (theoretical art-historical) categories, and opposed them to criticism which misinterpreted them as a mechanism of a law of history (*Gesetz der Geschichte*) to order history as a totality (*Geschichte als Ganzes*).¹⁰² The conceptual categorisation is not about artworks per se, nor about history per se, but about the

⁹⁸ Barash (1988), p. 70f.

⁹⁹ Dittmann (1967), p. 81.

¹⁰⁰ Hauser (1958), p. 133.

¹⁰¹ Notebook 65 (late 1923 – March 1924), p. 9. "*Grundbegriffe* geschrieben, nicht um die Geschichte zu mechanisieren, sondern um Urteil exakt zu machen".

relationship between art (objects) and history. The theoretical terms are constructed concepts; they are constructed out of the coherence (*Zusammenhang*) between the historical situation of the individual works¹⁰³ and the conceptual, categorical principles. The *Grundbegriffe* are an abstraction¹⁰⁴ of history and of the individual works, for the sake of the construction of an art-historical rendering of a "developmental curve" which was integrated into the entire *Menschheitsgeschichte* and *Menschheitskultur*, human history and culture for Wölfflin.¹⁰⁵ The concretisationability¹⁰⁶ (*Konkretisierbarkeit*) of this abstraction into ideal-typical modes and into *Gesetzlichkeit*, is shown by individual works.¹⁰⁷ In this regard, Gantner informed us of an interesting passage in a letter Wölfflin had written to him on September, 22nd 1943, in which Wölfflin talked about the theoretical analogy between his theory of art history and biology. Wölfflin noted that: "although living beings are the only [empirical or phenomenological] reality, one was not prevented from a *Wissenschaft* of biology which works with general processes".¹⁰⁸ This elaborates Wölfflin's notion of the relation between the individual works and the conceptual categorisation in his text. Taken together, all works portray the notion of art in general; but individual works and art in general are not the same thing. Wölfflin attempted to trace a conceptual development in the sphere of the visual arts (*bildende*

¹⁰² Dittmann (1967), p. 229.

¹⁰³ Holz (1965).

¹⁰⁴ Coellen (1927), p. 379.

¹⁰⁵ Hermand (1965), p. 7. This aspect echoes the general intentions of Wölfflin to understand culture and history as integral parts of humanity, in anthropological terms, as already traced in the *Prolegomena*.

¹⁰⁶ Of course, this term, as many other translations of German concepts in this interpretation, is not really existant within the English language. The translation functions as mere approximate glimpse into the German intellectual discourse.

¹⁰⁷ Eckl (1996), p. 240.

Kunst, comprising painting, sculpture and architecture), and, more specifically, an understanding of art which was based on the conception of the participation of the subject. At the same time, he used the individual works in the text to manifest this transition of the spatial structuring and formation mechanisms, and to provide the actual visual experience of beholding for the viewing/reading subject. For Brown, therefore, Wölfflin practices a conceptual morphology, "not the study of forms but of [the] forming powers" of spatiality in the artworks; these "morphological categories are limited by design" depending on their conceptual connection, in contrast to taxonomical categories which are multiplied "in order to establish a stable stratification of reality".¹⁰⁹ The two modes, therefore, do not present a comprehensive survey of the art of the chosen timeframe as Wölfflin noted repeatedly in the text¹¹⁰, but combine the empirical aspect of individual works with a conceptual sense of formal and spatial possibilities. Wölfflin's entire argument hinges on the multivalent function of visual analysis (comparisons). Andreas Hauser noted that the explorations of historical works far outweigh the philosophical or theoretical discourses in the text; they do not merely act as exemplification of a theory¹¹¹, but construct a theory within history¹¹². And this is, indeed, the problem: on the one hand, the *Grundbegriffe* were intended as epistemological and conceptual tools to examine historical situations; but on the other hand, they are

¹⁰⁸ Gantner (1955-1957), p. 140. "Ebenso kann man sagen: das einzig Reale sei das einzelne lebende Geschöpf, aber das hindert nicht, dass es eine Wissenschaft der Biologie gibt, die sich mit allgemeinen Prozessen beschäftigt".

¹⁰⁹ Brown (1982), p. 381; 380.

¹¹⁰ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 5; 261, *Principles*, p. vii; 226. "...will nicht einen Auszug aus der Geschichte bieten". "Nicht die Kunst des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts wollen wir analysieren..."

¹¹¹ Hauser, Andreas (1986), p. 42.

¹¹² As mentioned earlier in the discussion of the illustrations.

themselves (as the two modes and the five pairs) constituted by the historical condition and the situatedness of the compared works. With regard to a *wissenschaftliche* methodology, the artworks function as objects of the analysis, as evidence for the idea of the conceptual categories, and as constitutive factors of the particular categories presented in the text. In this sense, Wiesing commented that there are no forms of spatial visualisation (*Raumanschauungsformen*) in themselves (*an sich*), meaning general conceptual categories divorced from all historical dimensions; they exist only in individual and historical manifestations, as generalisations generated from individual works.¹¹³ Wölfflin's *Grundbegriffe* work as a methodology of abstracted theoretical notions which are only observable, identifiable and concretely describable in actual works and in historical terms. This is a contradiction: Wölfflin wants to talk about conceptual categories but in order to do that he needs to look at concrete works which are in themselves particular fields and precisely not general. In view of the dependence of the conceptual terms on the historical situatedness of the constituting artworks, Rothacker posed the question if it was not Wölfflin's choice of this particular historical timeframe, the 16th and 17th centuries, which yielded and fabricated the dynamic structure of the *Grundbegriffe*¹¹⁴, as a theoretical and categorical system. Hauser similarly regarded Wölfflin's *Grundbegriffe* in the 1915 text as not valid in general (*nichts Allgemeingültiges an sich*) but dependent on

¹¹³ Wiesing (1997), p. 138. Note the distinction I make between two kinds of generality here: there can be no general *Grundbegriffe* pertaining to all artworks, only particular conceptual principles as generalisations from specific historical or cultural fields. While there exists the general idea of *Grundbegriffe*, they only can have an identity (e.g. two modes, five pairs) when extrapolated as generalisation from a definite corpus of material.

¹¹⁴ Rothacker (1919), p. 176.

specific objects through which they can be experienced (*als bestimmte Erfahrungsobjekte*), and therefore only applicable to the selected, historically limited timeframe.¹¹⁵ According to Hauser, Wölfflin was not searching for general aesthetic rules, but for the schema of the historical occurrences or appearances (*Erscheinungen*), that is, for historical laws.¹¹⁶ Hauser is correct in that Wölfflin presented in his text the particularity of the works in the chosen timeframe with the identity of the two modes and the five pairs. The *Grundbegriffe* of the 1915 text reflect (in their terminological identities of the two modes and the five pairs) the specific historical field which Wölfflin decided to explore. However, the particular identities of these conceptual terms belonging to the defined timeframe which was analysed, do not diminish the capacity of the theoretical conception to be utilised in the examination of another timeframe. Most likely, the result will produce different (categorical and historical) terms¹¹⁷; but they are, nevertheless, conceptual ideas and registers which function to investigate and interpret the visual and spatial involvement of the subject in artworks. Eckl also noted that reflections on the history of form are fundamentally dependent on reflections by the subject, on the conditions of the viewing, observing, and analysing subject, who constitutes and identifies the forms in the aesthetic synthesis and judgement.¹¹⁸ Within this briefly circumscribed context of *Wissenschaft*, the text is ambiguous and problematic. Wölfflin wanted to

¹¹⁵ Hauser (1958), p. 151.

¹¹⁶ Hauser (1958), p. 151.

¹¹⁷ Possibly more than two modes, more or less than five pairs. Not only the transition from one style, period to another, but also the multiple variations within one cultural context, as done, for example, by Winckelmann who observed the development of four types within Greek art.

¹¹⁸ Eckl (1996), p. 244, footnote 1.

create a systematic art history, by linking the real (the particular) with the ideal, typical (the general). The text presents, in Schwartz's positive words, a "new configuration of idealism, historicism and formalism that gave the history of art the intellectual conviction and flexibility to make it a *Geisteswissenschaft* on a par with the study of history and literature".¹¹⁹ The general intellectual context of the text in relation to the idea of history, in the early 20th century but also reaching back to the 19th century, is also significant for a reconstruction of Wölfflin's discourse.

At the end of his University studies, Wölfflin wrote in his notebook: "deep consciousness of fissure, rupture in the world".¹²⁰ Winkler described the situation of stylistic plurality at the end of the 19th century as "anarchy and lack of restraint" in the arts.¹²¹ Christoffel called the immediate historical context of the 1915 text, prior to the First World War "the disturbing changes of style and taste".¹²² This ambivalence towards the pervading stylistic pluralism created an ideology of modernity or modernism that problematised the multiple revivals of historical forms in architecture and the new art movements. People had the impression that the "notion of a unified culture was broken", which connotes a certain instability.¹²³ Likewise the alienation and objectification of the subject in the 19th century became factors within reflections on art and the history of the discipline of art history.¹²⁴ Modernity posed a challenge for the humanities which needed to rethink their theoretical foundations.

¹¹⁹ Schwartz (2005), p. 138f.

¹²⁰ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 135. "*Tiefes Bewusstsein vom Zwiespalt in der Welt*".

¹²¹ Winkler (1924), p. 224.

¹²² Christoffel (1934).

¹²³ Vidler (1992), p. 7.

Late 19th century and early 20th century art historical scholarship was characterised by the "penetrating recognition, subliminal or otherwise, ... that 19th [and 20th] century art was fundamentally discontinuous with the art of the preceding centuries".¹²⁵ This implied the recognition of a break of the present in relation to the past. Nietzsche regarded modernity as "an age of disintegration" in which "human beings have in their bodies the heritage of multiple origins, that is, opposite ... drives and value standards that fight each other".¹²⁶ The notion, that discontinuity is part of modernity "itself is defined by the idea that we can break from the past"¹²⁷ or that we can refuse the past. Art historical investigations into the past presented, at the same time, a retreat into what Löwith called "*gewusste Geschichte*" (known history), an escape and withdrawal from the events of the moment.¹²⁸ For both, historicism and modernism, the past was a problem. The sense of continuity had collapsed. Discontinuity was characteristic of the present. Watson wrote of the "already fractured experience of modernity and the event of 'detraditionalisation' which lies at its origins"¹²⁹, which were part of the *wissenschaftliche* rigour underlying Wölfflin's art historical approach to re-experience and reconnect with objects from the past and construct lines of tradition. Wölfflin was "divided between the demands for coherence and critique, ... repetition and renewal, continuity and difference".¹³⁰ For Hvattum, 19th and early 20th century

¹²⁴ Pochat (1986), p. 577.

¹²⁵ Crary (1992), p. 22.

¹²⁶ Nietzsche (1966), p. 111.

¹²⁷ Hamilton (1996), p. 4.

¹²⁸ Löwith (1981), p. 75. Something which Burckhardt engaged in.

¹²⁹ Watson (1997), p. xiii.

¹³⁰ Watson (1997), p. xiii.

society and art are undoubtedly in the midst of a crisis ... [but] the 'Babel-like' confusion of the modern age did not merely signify crisis and decay; rather, it signified the necessary reorganisation of society and art alike, preparing the ground for a new unity.¹³¹

19th century historicist plurality of styles was one condition of disunity and discontinuity, Dittmann argued, out of which the *Kunstgeschichtswissenschaft* attempted to co-ordinate the past as a unity and continuity.¹³² The "age needed to restore vital links between the artefacts of the past and the concerns of the present".¹³³ Wölfflin's 1915 text needs to be read in terms of these "general observations concerning the horizon of historical thought and the quest for a systematic ground for the human sciences in the context of the period prior to the First World War".¹³⁴ The *Grundbegriffe* then reflect the "conflict between a recognition of the fundamental historicity of human existence on the one hand, and the dream of developing a method by means of which this historicity can be mastered [or transcended] on the other".¹³⁵ For Wölfflin, history was a field of, in Hvattum's words, "continuous and involuntary presence, granting recognisability and meaning to the world".¹³⁶ Conceptual history was partly a project for Wölfflin to reunify a fragmented modern world. Wölfflin's text is situated on the threshold between historicism and modernism, embracing both, in the sense that "history is envisioned as being available to the present"¹³⁷ but also beyond it. To some degree, the past was a

¹³¹ Hvattum (2004), p. 158f.

¹³² Dittmann (1967), p. 81.

¹³³ Holub (1998), p. 111.

¹³⁴ Barash (1988), p. 40.

¹³⁵ Hvattum (2004), p. 180.

¹³⁶ Hvattum (2004), p. 181.

¹³⁷ Hvattum (2004), p. 173. My emphasis.

burden yet, at the same time, it was exalted.¹³⁸ The transition from historicist identifications and attributions of styles and artists to the 'history of form' was a kind of aestheticisation of the past. Dittmann observed that Wölfflin presented the *Sehform* (form of vision) as a unifying category of past styles from the point of view of the disintegrating present.¹³⁹ The association of the term 'style' with (art)historical analysis and the unity of this concept were so pervasive in the early 20th century that Gropius argued in polemical terms that "the goal of the Bauhaus [i.e. the present] is not a style, no system, no dogma or canon", but rather as beyond history.¹⁴⁰ Gropius' design ideals were opposed to any reference to history and based only on the present and, therefore, categorically not a style.

In regard to the historiographical axis of Wölfflin's text and *Grundbegriffe*, the contemporary conception of history was of significance. In the 18th and 19th centuries, the idea of history changed from the antiquarian collection and listing of dates, names and events to a concept of inner connection. Wilhelm von Humboldt in his essay "*Über die Aufgabe des Geschichtsschreibers* (On the Task of the Historian)" (1822), postulated that history was regarded as something above individual events. Koselleck traced the transition from the distinction and separation between *Geschichten* (histories, narratives), what Koselleck called *historia magistra vitae*¹⁴¹, and *Historie*, meaning the philosophical investigation of history, to one single term encapsulating both spheres of meaning, *Geschichte* (history), mainly to the 19th

¹³⁸ Wyss (1986), p. 33.

¹³⁹ Dittmann (1967), p. 221.

¹⁴⁰ Schade (1963), p. 119. Schade took this quote from Franz Roh: *Geschichte der deutschen Kunst von 1900 bis zur Gegenwart*, Munich, 1985, p. 87.

¹⁴¹ Koselleck (1979), p. 38ff.

century.¹⁴² In modernity, the past is generalised and could, therefore, be more easily compared and be made relevant to the present. 'Historical explanation' is itself a characteristic of the thinking of modernity. Hamilton quotes Meinecke who described this aspect as "the substitution of a process of individualising observation for the generalising view of human forces in history".¹⁴³ Barash observed that "the meaningfulness of world history was presumed to be characterisable according to [a] schema having universal validity, [and] lending objective comprehensibility of the past for the theoretician of the present".¹⁴⁴ Wölfflin's text adhered to this conception. History was a process which could be 'thought'. Heuss noted that historical knowledge was only the fictitious conception or, more notably, the imagination of coherence and relations (e.g. of cause and effect, of similarities and differences).¹⁴⁵ This is the context for Wölfflin who developed his *Grundbegriffe* as abstractions from comparisons of historical works. In this regard, Hvattum argued that the rise of the comparative methodology in the 19th century "implied a particular view of the world, one in which the notion of a hierarchy of ...[values] has collapsed, where every phenomenon has gained an equal and commensurable ontological status".¹⁴⁶ This attitude applies to Wölfflin's two modes and five pairs which attempt to reflect also a diacritical conception of the classificatory system. This is a marked difference between the 1915 and the text of 1888, *Renaissance and Baroque*, where a binary opposition between the two styles, periods, and architectural effects had been established.

¹⁴² Koselleck (2000), p. 30.

¹⁴³ Hamilton (1996), p. 30.

¹⁴⁴ Barash (1988), p. 79.

¹⁴⁵ Heuss (1959), p. 11. "geschichtliches Wissen... ist ausschliesslich Vorstellung".

¹⁴⁶ Hvattum (2004), p. 24.

In historiographical terms, Wölfflin's labels of 'Classical' and 'Baroque' are not solutions but demonstrations of the tension between conceptual terms and historical works. With the *Grundbegriffe*, it is "otherness, chartered through time, [which] leads to the registering of periodicity and change".¹⁴⁷ As such, the fundamental principles present an apriori category within the anthropological dimension of Wölfflin's viewer-related (*betrachter-bezogene*) approach to art history.

Kerber identified the viewer-related methodology with the conception of art as 'heteronomous'¹⁴⁸, meaning the artworks are anthropocratic, fundamentally determined by the perceiving subject, and tending towards the unity of *Kunstraum* (art space) and *Lebensraum* (life space).¹⁴⁹ While Kerber was thematising artworks, I want to stress that Wölfflin was also dealing with anthropological aspects of art historical thinking. Hermann Bauer problematised the issue, stating that *Stilgeschichte*, the history of style, could not produce an anthropological contribution; a new style is predicated by changes in the *Ausdrucksmöglichkeiten*, the possibilities of expression, of content, as transitions within the intellectual context of artworks.¹⁵⁰ Although Hermann Bauer saw the truth of a style in changes in habits of vision, *Sehgewohnheiten*¹⁵¹, he, nonetheless, focused on the content of what is seen, as opposed to Wölfflin's attention towards the mechanism of how form is seen and depicted. Landsberger specified precisely this detail of Wölfflin's theory, stating

¹⁴⁷ Golden and Toohey (1997), p. 3.

¹⁴⁸ 'Heteronomous' art was defined by Kerber in opposition to autonomous art which distances the viewer through manifestations of an aesthetic boundary, e.g. a socle of frame.

¹⁴⁹ Kerber (1996), p. 288.

¹⁵⁰ Bauer, Hermann (1976), p. 153.

¹⁵¹ Bauer, Hermann (1976), p. 153.

that "the scale for the value of an artwork did not lay [for Wölfflin] in the depicted objects but in the human subject, in the sensibility of the eyes which spoke to the innate sensory, sensorial nature of the eye due to an inner relationship".¹⁵² Form as seen by the subject circumscribes the conceptual field where depiction (*Darstellung*) is connected to mental visualisation (*Anschauung*) and modes of perception (*Wahrnehmungsmodalitäten*). In this sense, Wölfflin's text participates in the paradigmatic transition within aesthetics, changing from the singular paradigm of the beauty of the object to the paradigm of multiple *Sichtweisen* (modes of vision) of the subject.¹⁵³ Brown noted that "in terms of the principle of contrasts, Wölfflin's objectivity is inseparable from subjectivity ... his categories are anthropological and affective. They work as analytical categories because they work as human categories".¹⁵⁴ The embodied subject is the anthropological category on which Wölfflin's epistemological *Grundbegriffe* of visuality are based. Wiesing observed that "in the process of cultural formation (*Kulturentstehungsprozess*) ... anthropological and transcendental principles facilitate [the conception of] visual phenomena of culture".¹⁵⁵ Wölfflin's method of "a development which was manifested as polarity is nothing else than the perceptual-psychological possibilities of the subject".¹⁵⁶ The anthropological and epistemological dimensions of the subject in Wölfflin's text relate

¹⁵² Landsberger (1924), p. 35. "Dass der Massstab für den Wert eines Kunstwerks nicht in den dargestellten Objekten beruhe, sondern im Menschen selber, in der Empfindlichkeit seines Auges, das sprach seine angeborene 'Augensinnlichkeit' (ein Lieblingswort Wölfflins) mit innerster Verwandtheit an".

¹⁵³ Wiesing (1997), p. 146.

¹⁵⁴ Brown (1982), p. 389.

¹⁵⁵ Wiesing (1997), p. 74.

¹⁵⁶ Bauer, Hermann (1976), p. 79.

to the theme of the ability of *Erkenntnis* (knowledge) as theorised by Kant.

This discourse of the subject is a Neo-Kantian domain which envelopes Wölfflin's approach to art history. However, in the conclusion to his 1915 text, Wölfflin noted that the process of the transition of the aesthetic imagination was systemised into the five pairs which, he asserted, could be called *Anschauungsformen*, forms of visualisation, "without danger of confusion with Kant's categories".¹⁵⁷

Recent German philosophical scholarship has concentrated on the precise relation of Wölfflin's theory to Kant; Eckl and Wiesing related the anthropological and epistemological implications of Wölfflin's corporeal and spatial subject's interconnection of perception and beholding, imagination and depiction, with Kant's epistemological theory (*Erkenntnistheorie*) as presented in his 1781 text, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (*Critique of Pure Reason*). Wiesing argued that "Wölfflin himself saw his idea of the relational logic (*Relationenlogik*) of works as an addition, a supplement to Kant".¹⁵⁸ These recent philosophical studies of Wölfflin's *Principles* by Eckl (1996) and Wiesing (1997) not only relate the 1915 text to Kant, but also investigate the philosophical elements from a critical perspective. Eckl mostly explored Wölfflin's inconsistencies and contradictions when judged according to Kant's notions, that is, Kant's text is seen as theory against which Wölfflin is measured (and essentially found wanting). Wiesing, on the other hand, attempted

¹⁵⁷ *Grundbegriffe*, p. 262, *Principles*, p. 227. "Man kann sie Kategorien der Anschauung nennen, ohne Gefahr der Verwechslung mit den Kantschen Kategorien". My emphasis.

¹⁵⁸ Wiesing (1997), p. 117. Despite Wölfflin's comment that his *Kategorien der Anschauung* should and could not be confused with Kant's notion.

to explain Wölfflin's text by reference to Kant, highlighting relevant influences, parallels and distinctions due to Wölfflin's context of art historical thinking, as opposed to the purely philosophical domain Kant operated in with his 1781 text. The present thesis is not a detailed philosophical investigation of Wölfflin's discourse but a construction of the philosophical context within which Wölfflin's thinking can be situated, and the following comments will refer mostly to Wiesing. Already with the term *Anschauung*, visual contemplation, Kant's 'transcendental aesthetics' are implied, in which it is the central concept.¹⁵⁹ The *Anschauungsformen* are the forms through which the subject perceives and apprehends reality.¹⁶⁰ The idea that the visual is structured spatially cannot be inferred from the visual domain because visibility is only made available to the subject through the *Anschauungsformen* in the mind.¹⁶¹ For Kant space (and time) functioned as an epistemological category of the *Anschauungs-formen*, as a structure of the identity and as an organisation-mechanism of the phenomenological reality of the subject.¹⁶² While Kant integrated the idea of *Anschauungsformen* within the reasoning of his transcendental theory at a general, static and ahistorical level, for Wölfflin, the concept of *Anschauungsformen* implied the opposite, namely the individual and bodily, dynamic and historical, and acting as description-mechanism for his theory of artistic forms.¹⁶³ Wölfflin's text deals with the particular phenomenon of perception with regard to *Anschauungen* (visual contemplation) of the empirical life of a

¹⁵⁹ Wiesing (1997), p. 121.

¹⁶⁰ Kant (1781), § 1.

¹⁶¹ Wiesing (1997), p. 124f. cf. Kant (1781), § 2 1).

¹⁶² Kant (1781), § 16-24.

¹⁶³ Wiesing (1997), p. 126f.

person, a field which was bracketed off by Kant from his philosophical exploration which presupposed a universal and transcendental subject.¹⁶⁴ For Kant the transcendental subject was an abstracted and depersonalised configuration to explore the general mental and epistemological faculties of the human being. Wölfflin extended -or possibly subverted, seen from the idealistic position- Kant's notion of the transcendental subject into a fundamentally embodied subject located in history. Wölfflin thought about aesthetics in general terms of apriori Kantian concepts but within a historical field. Cheetham specified that Wölfflin "developed an ultimately Kantian system of formal categories with which the eye historically sees and organises the world".¹⁶⁵ Wölfflin's *Grundbegriffe* "are not in themselves Kantian", Cheetham observed, "but their necessity in our 'subjective' perception of the world and art follows a Kantian pattern".¹⁶⁶ In this respect, Grisebach noted that Wölfflin was the first to explore "the general forms of visual contemplation (*Anschauungsform*) of a particular time"¹⁶⁷, meaning he historicised the activity of the visual imagination, the mental picturing of the subject.

It is the spatiality of the body and the historicity of Wölfflin's subject which pre-figure all engagement, perception, imagination and depiction of objects, the world, life and existence. The logic of possibilities of depiction (*Gestaltungsmöglichkeiten*) implies a "media theory of consciousness (*mediale Theorie des Bewusstseins*)"¹⁶⁸ in which the body, and more prominently visuality, directs and guides,

¹⁶⁴ Wiesing (1997), p. 131.

¹⁶⁵ Cheetham (1998), p. 48.

¹⁶⁶ Cheetham (1998), p. 48.

¹⁶⁷ Grisebach (1924), p. 18.

¹⁶⁸ Wiesing (1997), p. 133.

conditions and substantiates our understanding of art and history. It is not only the seeing of objects but, more importantly, the (mental) visual apprehension of spatial structures which is Wölfflin's theme. Wiesing interpreted Wölfflin's neo-Kantian theory of art-historical *Grundbegriffe* as outlining "the logical limits of the polymorphism of the visual world".¹⁶⁹ More precisely, Wölfflin's terms pertain to a twofold system of aesthetics reflecting not necessarily reality but rather the possibilities of how reality is or was perceived, visually processed and depicted (in artworks). We "assume a lawfulness ... because our understanding itself requires it".¹⁷⁰ In this respect, the human subject functions as a self-referential system. The fundamental dependence of the object (and knowledge of it) on the subject was also further explored by Arthur Schopenhauer.

The term *Vorstellung* (imagination, idea, conception) was of pivotal importance to Schopenhauer in his major text, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* (*The World as Will and Idea*).¹⁷¹ For Schopenhauer, the world, experience, and knowledge are based on the intuitive imagination, *Vorstellung*, particularly on the visual imagination, *anschauliche Vorstellung* of the subject.¹⁷² Wölfflin's text echoes Schopenhauer's thinking, in as much as the *Vorstellung*, the imagination consists of the mental process and activity of capturing and producing a mental image of a perceived occurrence, appearance or object by the subject. The concept of *Vorstellung* implies the relevance for and the essential dependence (of the object) on the subject. Wölfflin's approach to art history is

¹⁶⁹ Wiesing (1997), p. 129.

¹⁷⁰ Hvattum (2004), p. 130.

¹⁷¹ 'Vorstellung' in the title of Schopenhauer's text is usually, but I would argue incorrectly, translated as 'Representation'.

¹⁷² Schopenhauer (1844), vol. 1, Book 1, § 1-4. Book 2, § 17.

fundamentally based on this prevalence of the viewing subject. Schopenhauer based all knowledge on the appearance of objects in the world which have been perceived visually and/or through experience.¹⁷³ For Schopenhauer, the world as idea is the visualisation of the will, and works of art demonstrate this via their visuality.¹⁷⁴ Wölfflin wrote in his notebook "the world of the visual"¹⁷⁵ which circumscribes the domain of perception, imagination and artistic depiction. An artwork, for Wölfflin, was an instrument of knowledge due to its visually depicted form relating to the mental picturing in the process of perception and depiction, and due to its depicted spatial structure relating to the bodily, that is, the ontological identity of the subject. The visual relations of form and space in artworks prompt access to the invisible arena of visual contemplation (*Anschauung*) in the mind of the artists; in short, "the [spatial] infrastructure of the artwork allows a view into the syntax of the visual imagination, into the conditions of the subject".¹⁷⁶ Wölfflin's art-historical *Grundbegriffe* were generated by the spatial visuality (*Sichtbarkeit*, in reference to Schopenhauer) of artworks in relation to the epistemological and ontological identity of the embodied subject. Wölfflin's emphasis on the significance of the visual experience of artworks connects back to Dilthey's¹⁷⁷ agenda of *Erlebnis*¹⁷⁸, to the project of re-engaging with the visual worldviews of the past.

¹⁷³ Schopenhauer (1844), vol. 1, Book 3, § 31.

¹⁷⁴ Schopenhauer (1844), vol. 1, Book 3, § 52.

¹⁷⁵ Notebook 12 (1886), p. 15. "Die Welt des Sichtbaren".

¹⁷⁶ Wiesing (1997), p. 153.

¹⁷⁷ Wiesing (1997) noted that "one should not forget that Wölfflin was Dilthey's colleague at the University of Berlin from 1901 to Dilthey's death in 1911 (p. 135, footnote).

¹⁷⁸ Dilthey's notion of *Erlebnis* has been explored in chapter one in reference to the aesthetic experience of architecture in the *Prolegomena*.

In the 1915 text, the *Erlebnis* of artworks is multiple and complex. The aesthetic experience of two illustrations side by side is of a marked difference to the discussion of one work at a time. Similarly, reductions in size and scale or enlargements in slides, in essence all reproductions, alter the experience of the (original) work (in situ). The visual experience of selected historical works not only exemplifies the *Grundbegriffe* (as the two modes and the five pairs), but also concretises the visual engagement of the subject in the reception and perception of art in view of Wölfflin's theoretical conception of this fundamental connection of subject and object. The *begreifen*, understanding, of artworks as historical and conceptual material is pivotal for Dilthey and Wölfflin. Dilthey linked the processes of aesthetic perception and depiction by the artist with the observation of artworks by the subject.¹⁷⁹ "For Dilthey's epistemology denies in effect that there is a separation between object and subject", he is after their structural connection and relationship in and across time.¹⁸⁰ Aesthetic understanding, for Dilthey, consists of both, access to the past and the *wissenschaftliche* systematisation of the material, in order to provide an anthropological *Kulturgeschichte*. Wölfflin's 1915 text reflects thoroughly Dilthey's thinking. Wölfflin conceives the art object -as form and spatial structure- in fundamental affinity to the subject. Wölfflin attempts to create a conceptual and historical terminology with which to organise art historical thinking, he presented a new conception of art history, *Wisser* called it -with reference to Kant- "a

¹⁷⁹ Dilthey (1892), vol. VI, p. 271 (of 1924 edition). Dilthey writes: "I have to supplement (*ergänzen*) the analysis of the impression with the one of the production... The processes of aesthetic perception (*ästhetisches Auffassen*) of reality in the production (*im Schaffen*) of the artist and in the experience, the enjoyment (*im Genießen*) of the artwork are thereby related (*verwandt*)".

critique of art-historical judgement, *eine Kritik der kunsthistorischen Urteilskraft*"¹⁸¹.

To conclude, the several functions of the *Grundbegriffe* portray the ambiguity of the text. They manifest concepts for the analysis of the spatial aesthetics of the subject, partaking thereby in art-historical practice, the thinking of history-writing, and in an epistemological investigation. With this, Wölfflin demonstrates his theory of art history in the *wissenschaftliche* systemisation of the visuality of subject and object into regimes of vision which "offered unmediated sensory access to past worldviews"¹⁸², to the differences of seeing the world. In practical terms, the methodology of comparisons and of illustrations is based on the participation of the subject in the 'aesthetics of perception and reception'. The rhetorical predisposition of the comparisons and the paired illustrations to a dichotomous categorisation fuels the latent theoretical exploration of the *Grundbegriffe*. With the consideration of the subject in terms of a theory and history of visuality, the notions of spatiality and bodily form give an account of change in human perception. The paradigmatic embodied beholder (artist, viewer and historian) demonstrates Wölfflin's paramount concern for a *kulturhistorische* anthropology, a *menschliche Kulturgeschichte* of the visual domain. And thereby, Wölfflin confusingly does it all: epistemological exploration, theory and history, *wissenschaftliche* analysis, systemisation and interpretation.

¹⁸⁰ Iggers (1968), p. 136; 140. .

¹⁸¹ Wisser (1934).

¹⁸² Hatt and Klonk (2006), p. 66.

But this is precisely the problem in Wölfflin's thinking and his text. The multiple identities of the *Grundbegriffe*¹⁸³ produce conflicts which are a symptom of the inherent contradiction of the emergent discipline of art history. Wölfflin has to work in the service of both, Kant's formalism and Hegel's historicism. The technique of comparison facilitates the interweaving of radically different things: historical categories and conditions of form and of spatial organisation, a theoretical apriori sphere and concrete historical examples. One might say, the more Wölfflin attempts to clarify his ideas, the more he knots the terms and adds concepts, increasing the (unconscious) contradictions. He is struggling. The elucidation and affiliation of multiple issues¹⁸⁴ do not yield a lot of art historical arguments but rather display the multiple fields of operation¹⁸⁵ of the text. The *Principles* is not really about individual works, although the text is full of references and illustrations of specific examples. The analysis of work and the generalisation of characteristics into concepts, that is, the micro- and macro-aspects of research, present an insoluble problem. The experience of concrete works of art (not to mention the complexity of the experience of photographic reproductions of objects in the illustrations) stands in contrast to Wölfflin's unifying terminology and his theory of art history as developmental system.¹⁸⁶ The *Grundbegriffe* contain problematic allusions to apriori notions for the writing of history (the concern for the subject and form) and to the conceptual apriori (of visibility and

¹⁸³ Conceptual or theoretical, categorical, and historical identities.

¹⁸⁴ Aesthetic experience, perception, spatial forms, regimes of vision, the visual imagination, works and illustrations, artistic production and depiction.

¹⁸⁵ Epistemological speculations, methodology (comparison, illustrations), history-writing, *wissenschaftliche* systemisation, theory of art history in terms of the subject and form.

¹⁸⁶ Dittmann (1967), p. 59.

visual regimes) within the historical material. The concerns of history and theory are fundamentally interlocked: the investigation into conceptual speculations about the subject is explored with regard to and based upon the historical analysis and interpretation of objects. Because these aspects are entangled to such an extent, it was difficult for critics to engage with the text. Art historians were alienated by the theoretical implications, which led some to the criticism of the text of not being historical.¹⁸⁷ While theorists were alienated by the positioning and anchoring of the conceptual ideas in historical material. For some scholars, the text maintained a balance between theoretical and empirical concerns¹⁸⁸, while others regarded Wölfflin's theoretical material as too vague, and only because of the accompaniment of historical examples, did the conceptual ideas gain some sort of credibility¹⁸⁹.

What could be called Wölfflin's failure to clarify and separate the conceptual description of the *Grundbegriffe* from the categorical and historical explorations is clearly the wrong approach to this text. Wölfflin could not have distinguished between these fields because, not only was his investigation placed in both dimensions simultaneously, but the intellectual condition of the emergent discipline of art history also attempted to consolidate them.

The union of history and theory was necessary because art, architecture and culture in general, were defined and constituted

¹⁸⁷ Ferguson (1948), p. 363 "unhistorical though it was". Hüttinger (1967), p. 111 "not about the actual historical field". Bauch (1962), p. 175 "everything historical has been left aside"; 178 "under abandonment of all historical factors". A similar criticism was made about *Renaissance and Baroque* by Rampley (2001), p. 271, mentioned in the previous chapter.

¹⁸⁸ Hart (1995), p. 72.

¹⁸⁹ Thuillier (1995), p. 19.

by these terms. As Wölfflin writes in a notebook in 1886/87: "*Kunstwissenschaft* (the *Wissenschaft* of art) = art history and aesthetics. Historians need aesthetic terms to understand. Would only be superfluous, if art history should only present successions".¹⁹⁰

In the 1915 text, the two modes and the five pairs exemplify Wölfflin's intention to produce *kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe*, art-historical concepts, that is, notions and terms for art historical analysis and interpretation of historical material, as the title suggests. He furthermore demonstrates a *grundbegriffliche Kunstgeschichte*, a theory of, or conceptual art history, outlining a particular theoretical approach towards the discipline.

In the following conclusions, the arguments of the individual texts and chapters will be related to each other and to the more general arguments of the thesis. The most significant characteristics of Wölfflin's discourse will be succinctly summarised.

¹⁹⁰ Notebook 14 (1886/87), p. 182. "*Historiker braucht die ästhet. Begriffe zur Begreifung. Wären nur dann überflüssig, wenn Kunstgeschichte nur das Nacheinander vorführen sollte*".

In the *Prolegomena*, Wölfflin developed his approach to architecture and art history, which set a program for his entire life. His ideas evolved out of the fundamental concern for the subject's involvement in the object. The subject's aesthetic experience (Kant) and the *Erlebnis* (Dilthey) of architecture were reflected and framed by the anthropomorphic terminology. Wölfflin focused his exploration of the nature of the subject on the concept of the body. His notion of bodiliness (*Körperlichkeit, Körperhaftigkeit*) defined and linked the directionality and organisation of the body with the process of the aesthetic experience and perception of architecture. The ontology (form, expression and will) and the epistemology (instrument of perception) of the body together institute the theory of an embodied architecture. Bodiliness is thereby functioning ambiguously in a double role: firstly, as an expression of bodily attitudes and ideals, which situates the architecture within a particular moment in time and history. Secondly, bodiliness is a mechanism with which the subject can experience the architecture of the past; the body is, in this regard, a vehicle to transcend time and history. Wölfflin explored two different concerns: a theory of architecture, what architecture is in relation to the subject (the expression of bodily identity), and a theoretical history of architecture, how one can interpret architecture from the past (by experiencing it with the body). These issues are folded together in the notion of bodiliness but, they involve diverse fields of investigations, making the text problematic.

In relation to Wölfflin's notebooks, the concern for the subject was based, I argued, on the idea of a *kulturgeschichtliche* anthropology, a *menschliche Kulturgeschichte* which underlined his life-long search for human identity and tradition in the cultural sphere. The prevalent interest in the subject in this 'philosophical psychology project' of the text was centralised on 'the architectural search for self-knowledge'. In the context of 19th historicism, Wölfflin's dissertation exemplified the conflict of analysing historical architecture in view of the multiple contemporary or recent revivals of historical styles. The *Prolegomena* gives an account of how to relate to the architectural past and how to attain and construct knowledge of it, that is, through the bodily experience of buildings.

In *Renaissance and Baroque*, Wölfflin continued to use his anthropomorphic language and elaborated his theoretical account of the subject's architectural experience of bodiliness, by comparing spatial effects of the architecture of Rome in the 16th century. Burckhardt's impact directed Wölfflin to this particular historical field of the Renaissance and the Baroque. Wölfflin compared architectural forms of bodiliness and spatiality in terms of 'the Baroque vs. the Renaissance' in order, I argued, to emancipate the status of the Baroque from mere declining phase of the Renaissance to an equal totality or art historical period. The comparative methodology entailed the conflicting notions of both opposition (different architectural effects and styles) and development (emergence of the Baroque). Wölfflin's intention to describe the two styles diacritically was, however, articulated as a binary opposition or asymmetrical definition in which the category of the Baroque was

conceptually dependent on the Renaissance. This split between intention and formulation remains problematic.

In relation to the archival notebooks, the 1888 text displayed Wölfflin's ambition to practice 'history as *Wissenschaft*'. As co-ordinated and integrated system of theoretical investigation and historical analysis, Wölfflin's methodology is emblematic of the *Verwissenschaftlichung* ('scientification') of the emergent discipline of art history. In the intellectual context of the 19th century, Hegel's philosophical and theoretical historicism was the framework for Wölfflin's exploration of 'the historicity of bodiliness'. The experience of architectural effects constructed a history which is fundamentally based upon the subject.

In the *Principles*, Wölfflin treated a similar but slightly enlarged field of history¹. The distinction of the Renaissance and the Baroque was again established by the technique of the comparison, as in the 1888 text. But while Wölfflin analysed the different architectural effects of bodiliness in *Renaissance and Baroque*, in the *Principles*, he explored the difference of these styles in terms of visibility (*Sichtbarkeit, Anschauung*). In this analysis of visibility, Wölfflin developed *Grundbegriffe* with a diversified terminology in which I have detected three interconnected and conflicting functions and identities. As conceptual terms, the *Grundbegriffe* defined a system of visual discourses of the spatial aesthetics of the subject. Visibility was conceived as an epistemological aspect of the process of visualisation (*Anschauung, Vorstellung*) of form and space, during

¹ The 16th and 17th centuries and Southern and Northern Europe.

perception (*Wahrnehmung*) and depiction (*Darstellung*). The role of the subject was split into viewer and artist. As categorical terms, the *Grundbegriffe* outlined and demarcated two particular historical and subsequently dominating modes of beholding or vision, the visual worldviews of the Classical and the Baroque. As historical terms, the *Grundbegriffe* were a register for the differing patterns of spatial composition and organisation of the two categories in five pairs. The numerous functions of the *Grundbegriffe* reflect Wölfflin's various objectives in the text. Apart from exploring epistemological speculations, he wanted to display his ideas of *Wissenschaftlichkeit* of his methodology and history-writing in terms of a systematisation of the involved discourses which made his text very complex.

Wölfflin's textual arguments of visuality were crucially constituted through the pairing of illustrations. The illustrations were a rhetorical instrument not only to exemplify the *Grundbegriffe* but, in my opinion, also to prompt the participation of the subject in recognising Wölfflin's dichotomous modes of vision through the reader's/viewer's own perception of two images.

The increase of photographic reproductions in art historical studies, I argued, directed Wölfflin to focus on the visuality of form in the composition of spatiality. Photographic reproductions of objects have significantly influenced Wölfflin in his reformulation of the conception of perception. The notion of bodiliness was extended, limited or focused to the visual domain of perception.

Within the overall argument of this interpretation, Wölfflin's fundamental concern for the subject was identified in all three texts as an 'aesthetics of perception and reception', with reference to the

notions of bodiliness and visuality. The ontological and epistemological nature of the subject predicated for Wölfflin this particular approach to the history and understanding of art and architecture. In relation to the archival notebooks, this regard for the subject was connected to the domain of a *kulturgeschichtliche* anthropology, or a *menschliche Kulturgeschichte*. In this respect, Wölfflin attempted to trace the different identities, ideals and traditions of the subject in the visual and bodily arts.

Secondly, the experience of the subject generated art historical knowledge as a practice. Precisely this empirical aspect of Wölfflin's theories, within a concrete history of objects and the abstract history of being, manifested a great dilemma and set up certain logical contradictions. The texts engaged in the struggle to illustrate the particular involvement of the subject in both, the definition of the object, in the sense of a theory of art or architecture, and in an epistemological account of the access to the object and its history. The conflict between the transcendental and the historical was played out in various ways. In this respect, Wölfflin was neither purely a theorist, nor simply a historian because he attempted to capture and circumscribe the interstitial domain between the two fields. Wölfflin's interest in this underlying philosophical and methodological significance was only implied and not explicitly acknowledged in the texts, adding to their ambiguity. Only by reference to the archival material of the notebooks did the relevance of the paradigmatic interface between history and theory become more insistent. The terminological and conceptual conflicts, and the multiple intentions of the texts reflected Wölfflin's almost notorious and problematic entanglement between

theoretical and historical issues. By pursuing this ambivalent sphere, Wölfflin was able to pose different possibilities for art history. Wölfflin's historiographical discourse should therefore be located in the theory of art history.

The three texts recorded the tensions, confusions and disputes that conditioned and constituted the emergent discipline of art history and its methodology. This third argument suggested that the inconsistencies or logical errors, ambiguities and conflicts discovered in the textual analyses are read symptomatically with regards to the complex affinity of the theoretical or philosophical with the historical domains of the discipline. Wölfflin's textual enterprise inevitably reflected the interests and concerns of his own time. Within the context of 19th century historicist pluralism, Wölfflin's abstract notions of bodiliness and visuality can be seen as strategic tools to cope with the increase in historical material and research. The general and thereby flexible methodological and theoretical concepts were intended to administer and order the abundance and diversity of objects. The discipline was searching for new ideas to govern academic art history. This historicist art history constructed elaborate genealogical trees² in order to explain change and to organise the historical process as a logical structure of succession and periodisation. The emphasis turned more and more to the acceptance of definitive ruptures, exemplified in Wölfflin's attempt to emancipate the status of the Baroque. The relevance of these *general and abstract concepts to access the varying traditions*,

² Apart from the delineation of the emergence and difference of the Baroque in Renaissance and Baroque, Wölfflin outlined the emergence and identity of Michelangelo's early style (1891), of the Renaissance in Classic Art, and the development of Dürer's art in the 1905 publication.

however, imploded in the 20th century, with the intensification and escalation of the professional specialisation of scholars. The need to unify the material and the knowledge was no longer pertinent. In view of the emergence of modern art movements, Wölfflin's concepts were problematic and apparently not useful for the analysis of non-figurative, abstract, and non-traditional spatial compositions. Of course, Wölfflin did not develop his theoretical ideas with modern art in mind but in regard to the historical works from the 16th and 17th centuries. But this further involves the crucial distinction between, on the one hand, Wölfflin's theories and methodology which were specific to the conceptual and historical application in the texts, and, on the other hand, the use (and criticism) of Wölfflin's concepts by later scholars to examine other times or cultural fields. The present analysis concentrated on the investigation of Wölfflin's texts to illuminate fundamental complexities of the discipline of art history as such.

In short, Wölfflin's textual discourse reflects the ideas and problems of a specific moment in the history of the discipline. This exploration of the particularly German-speaking discourse of the discipline included a description of the *Verwissenschaftlichung* ('scientification'), that is, the institutionalisation and theorisation of the discipline. In this respect, the recognition of the general constitutive tension between theories of art (Kant) and of history (Hegel) can be productive in illuminating both the intellectual conditions and the mechanisms with which the concepts and issues were promulgated and interlaced.

Some of Wölfflin's ideas have enduring strength, in that they make inherent conflicts of the discipline more transparent, particularly at times when the discipline and its methodologies are called into question. In recent decades art history tried to refocus part of its identity towards visual culture, the gaze and spectatorship, in terms of a history of visibility. This direction was prompted, in my view, by the proliferation of film and the digitalisation of computer images. Current theories present clarifications of the issue Wölfflin engaged in, by attempting to distinguish perception from depiction. Some of the concerns were explicitly addressed by Wölfflin. Indeed, Wölfflin was ahead of the game with his problematisation of seeing and perception in his theories of bodilyness and visibility.

In the current architectural discourses of 'responsive' and 'organic' forms and of the digitalisation of architecture, Wölfflin's ideas of bodilyness, visibility and spatiality have a certain resonance for contemporary concepts and implementations of the experience of the subject.

To conclude, although key questions remain unanswered and the texts continue to be enigmatic -which led to the extreme variety of interpretations and criticism in the first place- this interpretation of Wölfflin's ideas and historiographical discourse has attempted to re-investigate the textual dimension of his theories. The textual analyses in connection with the archival material were intended to interpret the acute problems Wölfflin was engaged in, rather than to simply criticise the conflicts of his texts.

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